

MEN IN BLACK, STEAK WARS, SLAM-DUNK SCHOOL, AND MORE

Esquire

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

JULY 1997

Wild Things

MY EROTIC
ON-LINE ADVENTURES
BY LYNN DARLING

I WAS A RIGHT-WING
HIT MAN
BY DAVID BROCK

ELIZABETH HURLEY
GETS CATTY WITH
GEORGE PLIMPTON

PLUS
NEW FICTION BY
MICHAEL CHABON
RICHARD BAUSCH
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Esquire

Features

"Dear Ravager: I've Never Done This Before..."

BY LYNN DARLING

In real life, she was a no-nonsense professional. On the Net, she was Pirategirl, a tart with a taste for spanking. He was into the burbs, boats, and bondage. The anatomy of a cyber-seduction, on-line and in the flesh.



40



52 Confessions of a Right-Wing Hit Man

BY DAVID BROOK

When Washington's fringe conservative pundit refused to attack Hillary Clinton in his reporting, his master threw him to the dogs instead.

60 Between the Lions

BY GEORGE FLIMPTON

The Paper Lion goes head-to-head with actress and model Elizabeth Hurley and finds that brains and beauty are mutually inclusive.

ON THE COVER: Photograph by Patrick Demerouti; Styling by Priscilla LaRue; Hair by Sergio Horowitz; Makeup by Sandy Lerner for Brooke's World Salon

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



46

The Harris Fetko Story

BY MICHAEL CHABON

Firing fourth and long from their own end zone, a tough coach and his estranged son go deep... with each other.



56

Someone to Watch Over Me

BY RICHARD RAUCH

When the truth is uncoiled at an anniversary dinner, a May-December marriage can spoil before the embers arrive. Pass the brandy. Make it a double.



62

The Last Cut

BY RICHARD RAYNER

Sure, Hollywood is a tough town—especially for a film editor with a burn tickle, an honest tongue, and a famously egotistic star for a client.

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARDS

CLUB WISE WALKING DEAD



Shirley Dinsdale Picture

RAMBLING IN THE



Michael Phelan and the

THE RIGHT CONNECTION



Cocktail Time

THANK YOU FOR RAINOLDI ROYBERG article "The Sound Life" (April). After twenty years of rock 'n' roll and disco, it will be a pleasure to return to the mellow sounds of my newly adopted record collection, with its Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, and my father's love of dancing to orchestral music. With this resurgence of a small slice of classic culture, could the return of civility, civility, and manners be far behind?

—JAMES HUGHES
Houston, Tex.



I WOULD HAVE BEEN interested for Rosenbergs to list all recent artists (both alive and dead) who grasp the scene, however, mention of the Brian Setzer Orchestra was shockingly absent. True to Rosenbergs' definition of Lounge, what Setzer wants is middle-class white rock music—employing overt Latin rhythms as its keynote when necessary. Given the Setzer Orchestra's recent success (in sync with that of the mambo culture) and the band leader's fifteen-year residency as a relevant song alongside the writer who seems to have overlooked the group.

—ANDREW CHAN
Philadelphia, Pa.

LOUNGE CULTURE IS AT THE heart of what many (if not most) people truly seek: stability, acceptance, immersion, variety. Freedom plus security. Fun without risk. No politics. No religion. No—as Holden Crisfield would say—"cheap success" to isolate and separate people on the basis of artificial barriers. Sensitivity with style, and hence the cherished cause. Good bless you, kids—these may yet be long for this planet.

—GREG NICHOLSON
London, Ontario

Death Be Not Proud

I WAS GREATLY DISAPPOINTED IN Jack Lesenberg's puff piece about Jack Keown and his co-

conspirator in assisted killing, Janet Good ("Death and the Matrios," April). Lesenberg fails to tell the full truth. For example, three of the women Keown has helped out of this world had no discernible organic disease upon autopsy. Janet Good participated in two of these deaths. Moreover, like attention is given to the fact that most of Keown's "subjects" (his term) were nowhere near dying but rather were disabled or depressed or both. Of even greater concern to me is the misinformation in the article about the travails faced by people living with a terminal illness. For example, pain from pancreatic cancer is instantly relieved with morphine, which, if properly administered, does not cause the patient to exist into a "moribund" state, as Good implied. It's a shame that Lesenberg was so ignorant of his subject and their crusade to legalize killing that he allowed the misinformation presented to the contrary by Keown and Good to go unchallenged.

—WILLIAM J. SMITH
Oakland, Calif.

JACK LESENBERG REVEALS: Billy Smith plainly has ideological conscience as deep as or deeper than Keown's; the point he makes is that this was a story about two people and their relationship with each other, not a story for or against assisted suicide. The conduct of the patients he cites as depicted, all did indeed have some medical needs; though they had chronic illness, though there may be open to question. Unlike Smith, who has never met Janet Good, I do not feel able to psychoanalyze her for or make personal comments on whether her pain can be controlled. I do admit to thinking that this is indeed, a body with courage.

Down-Home Talent

WHILE MOST OF THE POWERS that be in Hollywood seem content to manipulate the movie-going public with irony, exploit-

ation, and movies we saw twenty years ago, Billy Bob Thornton has gone to a film and a character for the ages ("Cutter Billy Bob," by Mark Jacobson, April). Thornton's *Sling Blade* is a new model for the Hollywood groom and bean counters who quantify the success of a movie by how much money it makes, how many people the state can kill or maim, or how much publicity is shown before the credits roll. Here's hoping the public swell of support for *Sling Blade* sends a message to Hollywood: In other ways, well done, Billy Bob, well done.

—DANIEL EVANS
Irvine, Calif.

THE SUPERFICIAL BEDROCK GOOFY-boy caricature of Billy Bob Thornton, conceived by Mark Jacobson, bears no resemblance whatsoever to the nervous, deeply profound artist who brought *Sling Blade* to the screen. Must your editors and writers sacrifice everything of substance in order to create an illusion of hipness and edgy truthfulness?

—BURLING LOWERY
Washington, D.C.

Stern Love

AFTER READING YOUR ARTICLE "Keeping Up with the Sterns," by Bill Zahner (April), I realized that Howard Stern is like a multiple personality—a man who can talk dirty and snuff the world with his amiable radio behavior but then come home and be a real husband. Maybe he represents the deep, dark within of some men, but in real life he's an all-around good guy. I may not like Stern, but I do admire a man who can love his wife for nineteen years and still be a popular icon to the media.

—LATONIA EVERT
Snohomish, Wash.

Letters to the editor should be mailed to *The Sound and the Fury*, Box 130, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019, or sent by e-mail to opinion@soundandthefury.com. Include your full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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Edward Kosner

The Truth of Fiction

This month, Esquire renews its proud tradition of publishing masterful stories of our lives

Fiction is back in the bone in Esquire. The very first issue, in the summer of 1935, carried short stories by, among others, John Dos Passos, Erskine Caldwell, and Dashiell Hammett (plus a dispatch from Cuba by Ernest Hemingway and a book column by James T. Farrell). Month after month, Arnold Gingrich and the editors who followed him have published the great writers of their times, the most



not of twentieth-century fiction.

Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Steinbeck are in Esquire's pantheon, of course, right there with Nelson Algren, Roth, and Updike. So are Nabokov and Garcia Marquez, Capote, Cheever, Styron, and Vonnegut. There are the native western writers McGuire, Hartson, and Cormac McCarthy, and the southern Flannery O'Connor and Reynolds Price, whose extraordinary novella, *At the River*, we'll publish this fall. And there are the younger masters Don DeLillo, Robert Stone, and Richard Ford, Tiana Clavin, Ann Beattie, and Martin Amis.

The superb work of these writers and others has won Esquire three National Magazine Awards for fiction and other honors. But tradition keeps us magic only when it is refreshed with compelling new energy—and energy is abundant in that, our fourteenth annual summer reading issue.

This month, you'll meet Michael Chabon's troubled young quarterback, Harris Furber, Richard Brautis's unfed young bride, and Richard Rayner's Hollywood film editor, who has an appointment in Saxony with a monstrous movie star. These stories were assembled by Rust Hills, Esquire's veteran fiction editor, and by Erica Blau-souze, our associate literary editor. They are contemporary in the best sense of the word, true to our lives today in their narrative, atmosphere, and emotional punch.

After you finish them, you'll want to read more by these writers. Michael Chabon, thirty-four, has published three books (*The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*, *A Model World*, and *Wonder Boys*) and is at work on a

new novel, *The Golden Age*. Richard Brautis, fifty-two, has written seven novels (including *Good Evening, Mr. and Mrs. America*, and *All the Stars in Sea*, *The Last Good Time*, and *April Fools*), and the Modern Library has published a selection of his short stories. Richard Rayner's novel *Los Angeles Without a Map* is being made into a movie, and Houghton Mifflin is publishing his latest novel, *Moder Rest*. Rayner, forty-one, has a novel in progress about a sperm architect who commits murder in order to build a skyscraper.

Senior writer Lynn Darling practices another kind of fiction this month. To explore the world of cyberbabe, Darling created an on-line persona, a noose spanking fanatic named Penetrator, and on her loose on *America Online*. Penetrator had an erotic pastime, and Darling learned a lot about how easy it is to morph at the keyboard into another self. (It was that, a true Darling covering out of the computer.)

Journalist David Brock learned a painful lesson of his own and told the tale in "Confessions of a Right-Wing Hit Man." The struggle of Anna Hill and the man who snatched out Tinopetene, Brock was the pin of conservatives until he failed to criticize Hillary Clinton in his new biography *Overnight*. Brock became a pariah among those he thought loved him for his crowding honorary. Now he knows better. ■

You can reach Edward Kosner by e-mail at EdKosner@Esquire.com or edk@esquire.com.



Michael Chabon



Richard Brautis



Richard Rayner



Lynn Darling

Illustration by [illegible]

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By Jeannette Walls

RODMAN AND DELILAH

Even **Dennis Rodman** can't always be as bad as he wants to be. His new book, *Bliss on the Wild Side*, was too much for **Oprah** (her talk show canceled a Rodman appearance at the last minute), but she should have seen the unedited version. According to a source close to Rodman's publisher, Dell, the *Woman's* handlers took out or toned

down the most controversial sections of the book. Rodman's agent, Dwight Marley, says he can't discuss his name in the original version but insists that the book wasn't cleaned up.

In the final version of the book, for instance, Rodman discusses changing his name to **Opzrah**—a disclosure one observer called the memoir's "wisest intervention."

Word, says the publishing insider, only because that name is too close to Rodman. In the original manuscript, says the source, Rodman wanted to change his name to "Dell"—that's it, one word, no last name.

How would sports announcements handle it? Perhaps the *Rebounding Artist* (formerly known as *Dennis*)? According to the source, it was Rodman's way of making attitudes about profanity.

The source also says Rodman was originally made tougher on NBA coach **David Stern**, as well as on **Michael Jordan**. The star-team stuff was largely edited out, "which is odd," says the source, "because Rodman isn't exactly been shy when it comes to speaking out about Stern." And though Rodman

was relatively gentle on Jordan, he did slam Michael's willingness to endorse products. "The manuscript called athletes 'whores' and singled out Jordan," says the insider. "It said that if someone came out with a pair of underwear that you wore on your head, Jordan would endorse it for enough money. It was a pretty strong indictment of Jordan's off-court behavior."

Finally, says the source, Rodman's people decided to take out a reference to his favorite alter ego. In the book, Rodman admits that he often feels like two people, one masculine and one feminine. The manuscript actually named them: **Dennis** and **Delilah**. The source adds, "So poor old Delilah and Buck were haunted."

SECONDARY COLORS

ANYONE WHO MAY NOT have had much competition on the bookshelves. A proposal for a *Pravny* Color-bias version of *Whitehouse* has been making the rounds at publishing houses recently. The author is going by the pseudonym **John Wilkins**—a catchline but effective way of presenting a literary sensation—and sources publishers he is well versed in the intricacies of *Whitehouse*.

"He's familiar with it because he was up to his knickers in it," says a source, who reveals that the would-

be author is **Stephen Smith**, a University of Arkansas professor who once worked as an aide to then governor **Bill Clinton** and who confided around **Andrew and Susan McDougal** as their *Whitehouse* trials. In 1995, Smith pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of conspiring to divert government-backed loans. He describes his novel, *Arrangement of Power*, as saying, "It's about a governor of Alabama who becomes paranoid and gets embroiled in a scandal and investigated by a special commission. If you have a special commission, you might think it's about *Whitehouse*."

WOMEN ON-LINE

NANCY FREEMAN has more than *The Power of Betty* facing her cover. The screenwriter, who happens to be married to Time Warner Inc. editor in chief **Norman Pearlstine**, was recently named prominently on *Pathfinder*, the company's on-line service.

Pathfinder carried reviews of Friday's book that had appeared in *Time* Inc. magazines such as *People* and *Time* as well as a somewhat favoring *OJ's* interview with the writer in which the moderator responds to Friday's answers with comments such as "Wonderful response," "Epic," and "Wonderful answer, Nancy."

but we wouldn't expect any less from you.") What's more, *Pathfinder* also established a site for Friday (www.pathfinder.com/pathfinder/voices/nc.htm), where Web surfers can, for example, explore her take on the affairs of the eyes.

"We do a lot of different things on the Net," says *Time* Inc.'s new-media editor, **Dan O'Brien**, "and sex and religion keeps me very busy. Net subjects." Here we have a proven bestseller with a new book coming out—and she was easy to negotiate with. Our feeling was: why not?

EASY WRITER

WHAT EXACTLY WERE the "artistic differences" that led **Dennis Hopper** to leave *The Truman Show*? Hopper's refusal to learn his lines, says one source, **Peter Weir** is showing the opposite. *Joe* **Carrey** film, in which Hopper was set to play a devoted TV executive. "Hopper has

Hopper's spokesman, denying the story. "He knew his lines." Hopper was replaced with **Kiefer Sutherland**, and sources were unclear. "Carrey supported the decision," says another source. "The words *Cable Guy* were haunting the filming, and Carrey, especially, wanted to avoid disaster."

THE LUNATICS ARE ON THE WEB

FOR YEARS, *World of Orbits* has debated whether it is **Frank Sinatra** or **Frank Sinatra** is actually a political allegory of the gold standard debate of the late nineteenth century. Our theory has it that politically naive farmers are represented by the *Scarecrow*, and the dehumanized and largely unemployed factory workers are embodied in the "rusted metal" *The Man*, the Cowardly Lion symbolizes **William Jennings Bryan**, a thundersome orator whose famous "Cross of Gold" speech advocated the silver standard but who many felt was a corrupt, double-dealing politician, the Wizard stands for **President William**

in sync. For example: • The song "Mean Dreams" plays as the *Scarecrow* says, "If I Only Had a Brain." • The lyric "Balanced on the biggest wave" is sung while Dorothy is balancing on a fence. "On the Run" starts when she falls off the fence.

• The heartbeat at the end of the album plays while Dorothy listens for the Tin Man's heart.

And, of course, the album has a rainbow on the cover. (Because the album is shorter than the movie, some sources say the record has to be started all over again, though there are various schools of thought on that.)

Rather elaborate. With sites have been devoted to the theory (www.orbit.com/orbit/lyrics/lyrics.htm), **Chris Rock** and **Chris Rock** (www.chrisrock.com/home/shows/whitehouse.htm), but a spokesman for the group denies that. **Pink Floyd** wrote the music with the film in mind. New York's *WINE-FM* disc **Dave Herman** has mentioned the phenomenon, promising, he says, more intricate research than anything in recent memory. "There is a synchronicity that seems to be beyond mere coincidence," says an other devotee. "And, despite their denial, *Pink Floyd* is just perverse enough to have created this. But I think whoever discovered it has too much taste on his hands."



Susan McDougal coming back to a novel near you



Hopper always looking for his next fix

a loopy, goopy attitude," says the source.

"Who is very precise. When Hopper started writing it, Weir got very upset. It was pretty awful."

"He's a professional," says

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AF AIR FRANCE



This month: Suzanne Vega hits the road, John Turturro gets sentimental, John Harle and Elvis Costello tear down some walls, and a promising new novelist gets into rehab.



The Movie UFO Busters

We arrive to introduce the usual mindless action extravaganza that Hollywood craves every summer—but this season features a mindless action extravaganza with an idea, so we're there. *Men in Black* (July 4) is inspired by wholesome American paranoia, specifically the urban legend that mysterious *Reverend* Day-women roam the country, intimidating UFO witnesses into silence. It stars Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith as agents of a mysterious agency with the slogan "Protecting the earth from the scum of the universe." It also features Linda Fiorentino as a rebellious ex-lover, further evidence that this movie has a sense of humor. And director Barry (let there be) Sonnenfeld brings welcome droolery to the weapons of intergalactic warfare. Think of it as Independence Day with a brain.

The Record Return of the Blue Harp

JOHN COBAIN'S *Intendances* playing is still legendary, so are the songs' abstracted hooks. But on *Strangle in All Men* (A&M Records, July 4), Blue Tractor's sixth album, the province of the band's live shows is finally captured. Expect the hard-edged jangle

of "Carolina Blues" to be blowing from every convertible that has a pickup line and the woeful "Fires" (complete with a weeping orchestra of stringed instruments) to be the official soundtrack for summer of '97 romantic backlogs.

The Book Dirty Stories

THIS YEAR IN *ROMANCE* may not produce a better opening line—"Thirty years I bury a couple hundred of my townpeople"—and the rest of the *Underworld* Life Studies from the *Dental* Trade by Thomas Lynch (W.W. Norton, July 4), lives up to that earth-shaking start. The author is a poet and small-town (Milford, Michigan) underdog who has turned out a memoir that is somehow superb even as an on-the-job with first-personages. There's nothing sentimental in here, but neither is Lynch solemn on the various subjects (the purpose of ritual, the mechanics of embalming, the emotional needs of the dead, indoor plumbing) that cross his agile mind. He even describes a suicide by electric current while without losing his balance or his good blackish humor.

MARK IZC

Our Kind of Guy John Turturro

He doesn't go to the movies a lot. He saw the good ones a long time ago. His eyes brighten with boyish enthusiasm as he recounts the careers of James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, Burt Lancaster, and others.

Guy? Like Cagney, he says, were there. He tries to articulate an elusive sensuousness, a "simplicity or solidity."

Not many guys could do great scenes with wallpaper. "I like acting with wallpaper," he says.

He grins. "I have to say this, but there's something more sexual here." He suddenly recalls another name. "You know what actor I like? He's not famous. Timothy Carey. You know who? He's the guy who"—his palm comes down on the tabletop—"smashed the cockroach."

The guy? Yeah. He and Turturro, they've got the same intense eyes.

And Daniel Hoffman. The first time I saw him, I thought, The guy looks like me a little bit. You know? Maybe I could be in the movies.

He was born in Brooklyn, in 1937 and grew up in Queens. "I did plays in high school, then I did plays off Broadway. I went back to school, to Yale Drama, on scholarship. Then I did plays again. I did one with John Herlihy [Shoreline, *Dump and the Day After*]." He doesn't mention that he won an Obie Award for it, doesn't mention the *Cannes* d'Or he won as *Cannes* for his directorial debut. Mac, mentions only incidentally the best actor award he won at *Cannes* for *Seven Pies*.

I remember him uttering with the peeling wallpaper in *Seven Pies*. Not many guys could do great scenes with wallpaper. "I like acting with wallpaper," he says enthusiastically.

The closest he's come to being in a Hollywood bar was *Que Pasa*, "which wasn't as big a success as

they thought it would be. I've never really been in, like, a black-barter movie."

His new picture, Tim DeCillo's *Shoreline*,

he and *underworld* (like *Box of Moonlight*), is certainly no blockbuster. "I have to make a living, but I've tried to do things that challenge the audience and myself. But those things can take years, years of your life." Italian director Francesco Rosi's forthcoming film of Primo Levi's *The Truce* was a

"very, very difficult" project that consumed five years. *Filming* ended in Ukraine last August, and "it took me about four months to finally come out of it. I couldn't let go of it when I came home."

I ask if there's anything he really wants to say. He thinks a moment, grins, says, "I hope these movies that I did both come out and that people see them. I'm gonna keep on doing what I wanna do. That's it."

—NICK TARTAGLIA

Box of Moonlight opens on late July



FRANK ROSENTHAL

Books High on Life

BY PHILLIP LOPATE



SOME FIANT MOVIES arrive invisibly, others get published with a bang. Round Rock, by screenwriter Michelle Hansen, has generated considerable chatter—in part because the author has a well-known actor, Gary Pisker, and her agent is the famously selective Monica Godfrey. The main reason, though, is that Hansen has fashioned a story moving, and

(mostly) unsentimental novel about someone fully that takes place in the most improbable of settings: a drunk farm.

In name is Round Rock, Inauguration a Magic Mountain for all. Then, for some go to do a day of dependency on liquor and the un-grown, gassy small-town life of Rio (population 250), in the southern States.

Like this story, Hansen's first novel, *Round Rock*, is a charming screenplay of a graduate student who has no idea how he ended up in a desert. He attracts himself to fertility, sympathetic Red Ray, the teddy bearish director of Round Rock. He also manages to make a warm, twisted divorcee named Libby, who plays the fiddle.

But *Round Rock* is the kind of guy who must disappoint. He shows away from commitment, makes a pass at Libby's glamorous friend, Belle, and leaves Libby in the lurch when her mother burns down. At which point the seemingly selfish Red Ray starts putting the moves on Libby.

For all its country-and-western

trappings, the novel's romantic turns from an elegant woman, Hansen structures it with the cunning of a Shakespearean comedy. And she does very good sex scenes that capture the psychology of both female and male characters.

The author's graduate of Lewis writing program, now in her early thirties, who lived in the southern States, played country fiddle, ran a catering business, had a drinking problem, and managed to become a University of Tennessee student—knows her subject matter. She's figured out a way to parcel out her experiences to a group of vivid, lovable characters and engage us in their proceedings.

The real brilliance of the novel lies in how it balances cynicism and hope. Hansen gives both doubters of and believers in twelve-step equal time. Lewis is the most articulate sufferer. When someone tells him that his work shows "the classic symptoms of an adult child of an alcoholic—over responsibility, work shenanigans, obsession with control—Lewis wonders if to what condition, then, [Lewis] can attribute weakness, laziness, and chronic nervousness."

As long as the novel stays close to its basic framework, the story plays. But on the last third, a creepy Mexican American leader takes the stage and the novel goes new-age on us, decoding it is more on the side of alternative healing and AA than on the side of mystical wack. That it's a seasonal rock and roll then.

Round Rock will be published by Knopf in July.

Michelle Hansen gives both doubters of and believers in twelve-step equal time

TOP: JAMES LEE

Our Kind of Woman Suzanne Vega

"GIRLS WILL KISS your ass. They'll tell you. They'll see the clothes off your body, but the savings right out of your ears. That's why we could never wear long earrings to school. Boys had a certain code about fighting, but with girls, forget it."

Just? That's tough talk coming from a wail, but then singer-songwriter Suzanne Vega—raised in Spanish Harlem, schooled on the Upper West Side—never exactly saw herself in the first flower portrayed by the press when she first won notice, with "Luka" in 1987.

"I knew where that image came from," she says, laughing and looking decidedly curvy as she makes some fish sticks and slaps on a Thomas the Tank Engine video to a

naughty little Carly—a wail, and he was skinnier and paler than I was. I mean, he was beautiful."

From the man behind such albums as *Chambre Hysterique*, Crowded House, Los Lobos, and Mr. V herself.

"If you look at photographs from back then," Suzanne says, "I was very skinny and had great big eyes. I had that sort of written book because I kept cutting off all my hair and wearing clothes that were too big for me. Even when I was an Avon lady I wore a green military jacket with a picture of a Vietnam woman holding a gun and a baby on the back. Every time I heard the word, it used to kill me. Nobody ever called Jim Carroll a wail, and he was skinnier and paler than I was. I mean, he was beautiful."

The former wail has just returned home from an anxious tour through European tour to promote her fifth album, *New Object of Desire*.

meeting all-woman musical ensembles, Suzanne is a seasoned vet used to her drink singer songwriters, artists such as Fiona Apple, Sade, Michael, and Jewel, among others.

The question, of course, is whether Ms. Vega would like her own child to follow in her footsteps into the limelight. "The answer?" She's thinking about marine biology," Suzanne says. "She could put on a lab coat every day, do something

good for the environment. That's my dream for her."

And how likely does such a scenario seem? "MIL," says Ruby's mom, sighing, with age-old parental sighs, "she knows Sade as the flame by heart. The entire material. Once, she went on the stage instead of the party, and when we walked her, she looked into the Donald O'Connor number 'Make 'Em Laugh.' Three years old and doing Donald O'Connor—that's probably not a good sign."

—JAMES BROWN

Like for now from July 5 through the end of August, Vega plays the fifth, sixth, eighth, ninth, and tenth of July. Daily show updates can be found at www.suzannevega.com.



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ALSO-READS

In disturbing order of efficiency: *The Secret Family: Twenty Four Hours Inside the Mysterious World of Our Minds and Bodies*, by David Bodanis (Simon & Schuster) is just what the title promises, evidenced with vivid, sometimes shocking, timely entertaining detail; *Touch and the Will*, by

Horacio & Go is a collection of short stories by Eugene Stein, the thirty-seven-year-old vice president of comedy dancing on the CBS, and it has a little patch of skin on the jacket, an on-the-book by Arthur (Airport, Bitter, Where's) Bailey's *Detachable* (Crown) starring a print/lens/director, a serial killer, and Miami Beach and, finally, the incomparable *The Psychiatrist* (New Line Books) (Crown) is '80s culture's greatest hits, assembled and edited by R. Seth Friedman.



Music Crossover Blows

BY RAYMOND TUTTLE

TO ENJOY THEIR commercial success, today's "classical" CDs almost always must cross genres, and that's not good news for music lovers. Most of the time, crossover CDs are just cynical rip-offs of two consumer groups at once, and the end product appeals to no one who is seriously interested in either of the original ingredients. *Flaccid Damage* (Sire) by Rick and The Brain Pigs (Jim Watson) can't be too far off, and the only winners in putting like there are novelty records and the record company that can briefly escape their oversaturated, nerve-endings (*Would you agree to still covering a copy of Rick Watson's Journey to the Center of the Earth?*)

Given this reality, it's hard not to be depressed, even better, when you hear about *Tinny and Meg* (reformer) a new CD of music composed and played by English classical musician John Harle. *Disabling* (two two-way crossover, Harle grabs for several genres all at once. During the CD's novelty three minutes, here are some of the things that happen: (1) in a gravelly voice, a sad but wise Elton Costello affectionately croons songs from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, (2) Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells* (remember *The Exorcist*) is parodied in the style of court music from fourteenth-century

France. (3) Harle and fellow sax blower Andy Sheppard look home in an improvised battle over choice bits of jazz, progressive rock, and hot modernized (4) reimagining his soprano sax (5) folk, Harle gallops across a prebureaucratic series with the attitude of *Ant Rose*, and (6) for once, a crossover project turns out to be much greater than the sum of its parts.

No, *Kerry G* this isn't. What it is, as you discover after a few hours, is a masterpiece of the highest caliber. It's also both satisfyingly concise and magnificently audacious—a grand conglomeration of stylistic and emotional contrasts. "Light and darkness," comments Harle in the CD booklet. "Good and evil. Sacred and profane. The doublethink of the modern mind." Harle, who is forty years old, has proved himself capable of doing contrasts. He is the most recorded classical non-phenom in the world, but he's



also a force in British jazz and pop, and he composes too.

What about *Elvis*? Having traveled a long way since meeting Alison that his life in music, he turned up in 1993 with the *Brooklyn Queens* to deliver *The John Lennon*, wrote some songs for singer Anne Sofie von Otter, and organized London's well-known genre-buster, the *Meltdown Festival*, where he first met Harle. The sax, who

Classical-sax wizard John Harle and Elvis Costello have made that rare thing—a genre-busting CD that succeeds wildly.

had long admired Costello's vocal director and would like time in along him to contribute to *Time and Magnificence*. Costello "performances of my songs...are born of a passion and an intensity that's hard to find." Harle writes in the booklet.

The artistic success of *Time and Magnificence* can't be denied on Costello, however, one on Harle's collaborators (who include counter-singer William Purcell, soprano Sarah Leonard, the Balanescu Quartet, London Voices, and other fine musicians). Instead, the credit should go to Harle himself, who has shown that all that crossover needs to work is integrity, passion, and the vision to challenge listeners—not merely to suck up (or, in this case, to blow up) to them.

Time and Magnificence is available on Apple records.

NEXT UP

WHAT A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE CULTURAL FIGURES ARE UP TO

Nan Goldin: The photographer of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* will publish, later this year, her collection *Ten Years After* taken from her recent exhibit in Naples. She and fellow photographer David Armstrong are also curating a show for New York's Matthew Marks Gallery on artists and their lovers. What Goldin really wants, though, is to direct a movie. "But I've been saying that for twenty years," she says. "I wish I could say I was starting one." She'll have a September exhibit at the Yvon Lambert Gallery in Paris.

Joan Allen: The twice-Oscar nominated actress (for *The Crucible* and *Nurse*) is starring in John Woo's recently released action-suspense thriller, *Runaway Train*. This fall, she will appear in Gary Ross's *Remains of the Day* (based on the Rick Moody novel), with Kevin Kline and Sigourney Weaver. "It culminates in a grotesque wedding scene by these characters who thought they had enlightened marriages but were actually being enlightened," Allen says.

Atom Egoyan: The Canadian director of *The Adjuster* and *Exotica* is collaborating with *Yo Yo Ma* on *Sonatas*, an hour-long dramatic performance piece based on Bach's Suite no. 4 for solo cello, and he's presenting his video installation *Amore, Amore* at the Venice Biennale in August. In addition, he wrote and will direct an original opera ("my new love"), *Barbarians*, for the *de Mause* World Stage Festival in Toronto next spring. Meanwhile, his film adaptation of Russell Banks's novel *The Sweet Hereafter* opens later this year.

Tony Bennett: The singer will have an exhibition of his paintings at New York's National Arts Club from October to through November 1 and is working on a children's album with James Moody. "Without working on a symphony, the songs will try to touch growing along and repeating friends, misuses and parents," Bennett says. He's also planning an album of Duke Ellington love songs, to mark Ellington's centennial in 1999. In August, he will do the Hollywood Bowl and Carnegie Palace in Los Angeles.

—MICHAEL J. ARONSON



Nan Goldin's *Elvis* and *Elvis* of the *Brooklyn Queens*, NYC (1994), part of her upcoming exhibit at the Yvon Lambert Gallery in Paris.

TONY HENDRA'S MILLSTONES

REINCARNATED: Allen Ginsberg, after an extended dispute on the Second Level of Being, where Ginsberg's spirit was accused of making a pass at the spirit of Steve Phoenix. The inked First post has come back as lounge blues.

RENAME: Aris, in the wake of widespread accusations of racist bias against blacks in creating his own "epiphany" and the car-canal giant's name "will present a more African American identity image to minority readers." From now on, Aris will be known as Aris "V" Andy.

PUBLISHED: By Knopf, Michael Crickson's latest novel *Blackboard* novel, *Scorplings*. Written in dialogue form with various directions, the story concerns powerful television and movie producer Jeffrey Goldblum, who is obsessed to death with one of his own books by his seemingly beautiful friend with, *Sharon Goldblum*. She then endures ruggedly handsome writer Bradley Pitt to prevent him from solving the crime. The book is expected to gross at least \$44 million on its opening weekend.

INJURED: Giacomo Giamelli Scuderi, in a bizarre barbed-wire accident, while she was helping David Copperfield practice a new illusion in which he would appear to cut a woman in half with a three-inch thick steel chain saw. Through a splinter, Copperfield sustained. "For some, my genius of illusion appears to have failed," but said that surgeons were confident the two halves of Scuderi could be rejoined.

STRUCK: The David Lane and Richard Gere, in *The Mirror*, with five first-time films selected by marked activities of PBS 254 (People for the Ethical Use of Two-by-Fours). The introduction of organization, which claims six million members, said it was protesting "the commodification of a corrupt and oppressive democracy that has screwed the Tibetan people for centuries" by "pretty-face actresses who wouldn't know Buddha from Buddha in a library" and who are creating "an instant celebrity out of a cynical, opportunistic old slave of the Mahatma."

FEEDBACK ALERT

➤ If you're the worshipful sort when it comes to guitar gods, you've probably got the canon (Kluge, Page, Yess, Hendrix) in your CD collection, but what of the denigrate? Those do you turn when you just your neighbors want to hear, say, Leslie West play "Mindboggling Zenith" or Ronnie James Dio's "Holy Diver," or the similarly spinning of the *Mary's* "The Way" *Power Chords* is a three-disc set of some of the greatest guitar anthems of the stables, sermons, and rights. In addition to the aforementioned, there are classics like Queen's "Killer Queen," the James Gang's "Funk #48," Coast 20's "Psychotic Reaction," and Billy Squier's "Everybody Wants You" among the forty-five tunes on the set, which is from Hip O Records.

PHOTO: JAMES

Dennis, Anyone?

Presenting the Rodman Awards for outstanding achievements in sports obnoxiousness

Back in 1990, when we began handing these out, they were the *Andre Awards*—because if you were going to single out the most annoying people in sports in those days, you had to start with Andre Agassi, who was more interested in being a basketball star in becoming a tennis champion. He was a dream symbol for modern sports, a kid who had made all the money and gotten the television commercials before he'd ever won anything.

And then you know what happened with him. He was Wimbledon, won the Australian, won the U.S. Open, even losted Barbs Studdard—who can ever forget her jumpcut up and down in that sailor suit at Wimbledon?—and in the process screwed me out of what I had assumed would be a good long run. You want to go bald, live with me. Just don't go straight. That's what Agassi did. At least long enough to stop annoying me and get his name taken off these awards. (Now of course, he's just a whiny nape who couldn't win a major title last year and gets attention only when he merrits brother Shredder.)

But I adjusted. I came up with the *Dennis Awards*. Here you had the only athlete on the planet who thought it was cool to dress like Hammer and caused him nothing more than Big Jackson. Late 80s when Dean Sanders wore a couple of Sugar Bowls, first with the 49ers, then with the Cowboys, he could still annoy you faster than Ellen DeGeneres's love life.

Only then it screws me. He not only comes back to baseball this season, he plays like a clump on a

bad Cincinnati Reds team. He hits and runs and steals bases and even chooses in the way he wears his uniform, so honor Jackie Robinson on the fifth anniversary of Robinson's major league debut.

And you know where the *Dennis Awards* are? They're gone, that's where they are.

Which is why I'm not taking any chances the rest of the way. The name he comes the *Rodman Awards* for this year and next year and for all time, and I will tell you exactly why, because this creep will never let me down.

He will never be out of the headlines. He will always be looking a cameraman in the balls or taking off his shirt, and showing us his graffiti-covered body or making a bad movie or producing another 150 pages of fish like his new book. Walk on the Wild Side.

Rodman is not just annoying, he is a punk for the ages. People say he is smart. Caring is often confused with intelligence, especially in the current culture of sports. The culture of the whole country, really. Rodman is a fool with an act, and a self-righteous. In the end, Rod-

man's popularity says more about us than it does about him.

But they are the *Rodman Awards* forever, whenever happens to Rodman and his trash life and his trash television show on MTV and his trash books after he is done with basketball. The awards go to him same forever because Dennis Rodman is forever.

Kind of the way some winners are. Anyway, here are the *Rodman Award* winners for 1998, go to, in no particular order of annoyance:



The coveted Rodman Award (honoring the Dennis Rodman Award).

Rodman Award: Andre Andrew Gula was the low the best in their research to work the old Bowe spend his. Rodman decided it was his life-long dream to be a mouse. So he crisscrossed his about twenty-two hours. It seems he didn't really like the accommodations on Ferns Island. On the food. Or the man drill program. Well, at home. As far as I can tell, the only thing Rodman liked about the Marines was their near commensurate about the few and the proud. Here's a Rodman, soldier.

But first, they and give me money! **Teen Woods:** (It's never worse) Right before he struck the world with his lousiest victory at the Masters, Tiger was in some fashion

magnificent, telling jokes about (a) the size of a black man's, (b) his pants, (c) his pants, (d) his pants. The kid looks because he loves, right? Hey Tiger—a Masters champion and this adorable Italian American sportswriter walk into a bar.

Fuzzy Zolner: Everybody knows he got himself into trouble for calling Tiger Woods a "lunk boy" at the Masters, then making a third chicken joke. A couple of weeks later, he hooked those comers up with some watermelon jokes. The guy's got a million of them. And who would ever have thought we'd see the day when a good ol' boy, drink in hand and hand by the wrists at Augusta National, could do so much damage?

Fuzzy, for you we have something special—a chicken-fried Rodman to take back to the trailer park.

Krisnamoorthy: This spring, the Jets wide receiver wore an angry, largely unrecognizable look after a sparkling 175, rookie season. Just One More Damn Ball was the title. Just One More Damn Ball would have been more like it. He'll be the only kid in his class at the Iowa Western Workshop with a Rodman.

Michael Jensen: It was sitting right there in Olympic Rodman when

Johnson came out of the turn in the run at the Olympics and headed for the tape. In those few seconds Michael Johnson was the fastest man who ever lived. And, I'm sorry to say, all I was left with was that *Nice then, Who'd you borrow them from, Sugared or Ray?* On the other hand, this Rodman will go beautifully with them. Think of it as accompanying guy.

John Calhoun: He is the coach of the New Jersey Nets, mostly because someone has to be. And he got himself into some trouble this season when he called New Jersey owner "That Garcia's Mexican idiot."

Hey, Coach, Garcia didn't choose to cover your team, but you chose to coach 'em. So who comes out looking like, well, the idiot here? Like the Rodman—the only trophy you're likely to win before the Nets say adios.

Dave Hubbertson: First, let me say that we're not talking about David Hubbertson the great American writer. This guy is the radio play-by-play man for the Miami Heat. Trying to locate on the air one night after University of Virginia grad John Curry made a nice play, Hubbertson said that basketball hadn't

been invented when UVA founder Thomas Jefferson was around. But if it had, Hubbertson continued, the shots on Jefferson's plantation would have made good basketball players. Forget Virginia—we've found a graduate of the University of Zoeller. Afterward, Hubbertson's spin was that. He'd meant to say that if those shots had had the proper advantages in the old days... blah, blah, blah. Here's what we're not going to do is the Rodman Awards contest put this guy in front of a live radio for his companion speech, okay?

Gavin Ray Pacenka: First, I've celebrated the true believers at Lambeau Field as much as anyone. In a way, the Packers are the dream team of sports, because they are publicly owned. They are of the fans and by the fans. But I've got to level. I'm tired of watching all those players jump into the stands and hug everybody I could deal with all that happy humping if they would just get rid of the cheerleader look. So here are enough Rodman Awards to go around at Lambeau. You want to wear something, try them on for size. Just like the doper hat, I'm begging you people

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David Thomson

Two Lays and a Lie

Hollywood's most notorious hound, Jim Toback, brings all his obsessions together

It is a cold, cheerless day in New York City; winter has set in and takes most of life's color away. But outside a building on Leonard Street, on TriBeCa, two pretty girls happen to be walking on the same doorstep. One of them, Carla, is beautiful; she has long blond hair and those stuffy, wary eyes that could belong to a princess lost in the forest or even to Rapunzel. The other, Lou, is short for Lou, not a pretty, spunky, funny, not quite beautiful, maybe not as sexy one as Carla but possibly more interesting. They are talking.

After all, why are they both there, waiting outside the same building? Coincidence? Each is waiting for a terrific guy she's going out with—a very big after, at least three nights a week. The audience knows it before the girls make the discovery. They are in love with the same hot and unregulateable, Blake Allen, a strong-gling, hot-tempered actor. When they realize the truth, and their own betrayal, there is a moment of glacial loss and emptiness.

There will be those in the audience of *Two Girls and a Guy*—for this is a movie that will be in a theater near you soon—who will argue that the girls, these women, would not hang around. The depth of betrayal, of damage, would be such that they'd stand aside the wistful guppies and forget Blake. Doesn't the delicacy they've found speak for itself and deserve their response?

"That is absolutely inconceivable," says writer-director James Toback, funny too and yet equally and the best young filmmaker in

America. "These are two women who've spent six months with a guy, thinking he was there. Now they know he's a liar and a cheat. So A, they want to know how



A red-blooded duplicitous cheat: Robert Downey Jr. in *Two Girls and a Guy*

he did it, and, B, why. Then, C, they're all a maw of conspiracy between them."

Which is pretty good on the spur of the moment—and no doubt a useful guide to the way Toback sets himself in the world—though it doesn't quite dispel my feeling

that these two girls hang around because they are the slaves of a male fantasy that needs to believe that however much it lies it commands them still. There's another thing: If they leave, there's no movie. And once you've seen the picture, you're happy they stayed.

Not that that should be taken as a warning. It's more a kind of early warning—and that's why I'm telling you about the substantial gap of implausibility you're going to have to swallow early on to stay with the movie. I am in no ideal position to present myself as a detached or professional reviewer of this film, for I have been friends with Toback for close to two decades. As such, I could easily tell you things that would put you off going anywhere near *Two Girls and a Guy*.

Toback is not easily described or believed. A New Yorker, he went to Harvard and then worked a few years as a journalist. He contributed to this magazine sometimes, and he wrote a remarkable book, *Jim about his friendship and psychic mawkish with Cleveland Brown*, running back Jim Brown. Then he skipped into movies and wrote a screenplay that became *The Gambler* (1984), directed by Karl Hinz and starring James Caan. That movie came from experience, for Toback was functioning even then as a chronic gambler, unable to kick the thrill or the dread of that swivelback life.

He wanted to direct, and is now he returned Jim in which

Harvey Keitel played a would-be corrupt punk who is also a debt collector for the mob. The violent linking of high art and raw street life was typical of Jim's imaginative preoccupations, and it was manifested concern in a kind of violence that alarmed many viewers. Nearly twenty years later, *Pages* is no easier to watch for the apocalyptic, yet it seems to me still what it seemed then: a fiery, mystic ranting about male ambition's hopes and anxieties and one of the great debates in American film. I said just that in print then, which scared my friendship with Jim. Film critics and movie-makers are not supposed to be friends, after all, though such a friendship the critic may stumble into discovering when a critical, notorious place the business is and how great a mockery it is over to talk of art and the American film in the same alphabet.

In the years since *Pages* Jim has made three other feature films—*Lou and Money* (1986), *Expanded* (1988), and *The Pick-up Artist* (1991)—which were somewhere between disappointing and terrible, with a little of the unadventured comedy thrown in. They were all made as regularly if marginal commercial movies, and they had the same intellectual themes as *Pages* but done as if in caricature and without passion. It occurred to me that Jim might be a one-shot director.

Our friendship easily handled that dismay. Jim sure he knew what I felt, and understood—or even agreed sometimes. Though I know the streaks of violence, dishonesty, manipulative nastiness, and nastiness in Jim, they never disturbed me or altered my sure sense that he was and is smart, loyal, funny, generous and good company. That he was also self-destructive was only offset by the fact that he did reach the age of fifty, despite every promise not to. That his talent often failed to deliver (for instance, he would start great scripts and not finish them) was only a sign of how deeply he had the psychosis of gambling.

Then, in 1991, he made an idiosyncratic documentary, *The Big Bang*, his best film since *Pages* and a vital step forward in that it was all shot in one house in a few days. *The Big Bang* was just a weird gang of people (testament to Jim's case at very different levels of society) talking about life and death, love, sex, and the

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"Dear Ravager, I've Never Done This Before..."

AS YOU ENTER THE VIRTUAL GOMORRAH THAT IS AMERICA ONLINE, YOU CAN EXPECT TO ENCOUNTER A WORLD OF KINKY MATH TEACHERS, BISEXUAL MOMS, AND PERHAPS THE DEVIANT LURKING INSIDE YOURSELF. BUT WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF ONE OF YOUR ELECTRONIC LOVERS SUDDENLY LEARNED YOUR REAL IDENTITY AND STEPPED THROUGH THE SCREEN?

BY LYNN DARLING

When the man in the green raincoat wrapped the leather-wire antennae around my hands, I began to think that it was time to part company with Penetr8.

It was Penetr8, after all, who had got me into this situation. Penetr8, with her sophisticated interest in aberrant sex, her penchant for the obvious double entendre, her sudden curiosity. Because of her, I was sitting in a deserted coffee shop with a man whose idea of a good time was a naked woman wrapped in duct tape.

Ravager, he'd called himself on-line. He was into bondage. On paper, Ravager was a tabloid headline in search of a story, the kind of guy who, when he finally appears in headlines between two badly stained floor caps, makes you wonder what sort of idiot would accept an invitation to meet such a man in the first place.

Not me, I thought. I was the one trying to make an ally out of the seductive woman, who had done an abrupt retreat when Ravager had reached across the table suddenly and grabbed both of my hands in his.

But Penetr8 had gone after Ravager, sought him out with herself in tow. She had dallied with him on-line for weeks, exchanging e-mail, playing him with questions, teasing him with her unabashed inquiries into his sexual adventures. There was a word for women like her, I thought, though I hadn't heard it used much since high school.

There was just one impediment to my indignation. I was Penetr8. Apart from the words I had written for her on a computer screen, she did not exist. Penetr8 was an experiment: my second self. And while in the beginning I had thought of her as a fiction, I could see how there might be some confusion on this score.



Rovner, for one, was not making much of a distinction between the two of us. "Have you ever seen a ruppel chirp?" he asked, pulling something long and sharp and shiny from his breast.

COMPUTERS TELL US stories—about ourselves, about the way we see one another. I had gone online because I didn't understand the stories I was reading or the power the stories possessed.

Some of the scenes were frightening, all military hard suits of tincoats who would try to kill or do it in the hands of strangers who had been taken to them from a back seat. Others pointed out a fan at the secret hidden behind the screen, a cartoon in the New Yorker pictured two corners of them as a friend of a computer. On the Internet, two of them said to the other, "nobody knows you're a dog." But other scenes were romantic. Gossip columns mentioned many celebrities who had married people they'd met online, over coffee, one would have a story about a friend's brother who had left his wife and family behind for whoever wrote the words that allowed from the screen, let it make.

The some of the monies varied, but all of them based at our profound distrust of the congress, as if it were a retail

different selves, each with a different agenda and personality. The computer would let me reinvent myself from the ground up, a privilege seldom won the warranty on the American dream. It could win me into a powerful feminine fantasy as well: no-be, at least. All the different selves a woman can expect to be in the course of a given day don't have to occupy the same physical space. The mother, the waitress, and the maverick need can all go their separate ways.

I chose Avantis Online because it is the nation's most popular on-line service. An AOL subscriber can have as many as five screen identities, each accompanied by an optional profile listing any information that might give a clue to the essential soul within. The profiles are available to all AOL members, and, in the great primordial pool of cyberspace, they function as best advertisements for oneself.

I tried on a number of screen identities, but I ended up with two. The first, Darling, was the one I thought of as the real me. Darling's profile was terse and to the point: forty-five, a writer, living in New York City, just the facts.

I thought of the other identity as my drink self. Her screen name was Pantergeist, her "real" name was Jenny. I listed her hobbies as wordplay and, on the advice of a friend well versed in chessroom culture, OTK—over the knee, erotic shorthand for spanking. She described herself as "in cursive." Her quote proclaimed that "it was not the treasure but the hunt" that she found excitement

I disapproved of Jenny. She seemed an obvious little tart. In the beginning, I talked about her with a certain professional distance and personal condescension. She was a device, I told myself: the right sort of person to create AOL's infamous chat rooms, places filled with one-handed typing and other, presumably occasional, obscenity.

INTERESTING. I was fascinated by the chat rooms. From what I had read, I assumed they were aimed specifically at young, gay men.

where various revolutions were at work, scores of mostly male college students proceeded to demonstrate the very maltenes of higher education in America. But there were other possibilities that were more troubling. What if a student's job, the homonormally challenged who frequented rooms like "Housewife Home Alone" and "Ade's Teacher Anything"? What if ordinary people were discussing said that twenty years ago was the preview priming of gays to, ting in movie theaters, wearing tunics on a sunny day? Was there a desire hiding in each of us? Was the modern a trip, was that would unleash the human sexual chaos that entire civilizations had been constructed to repress?

I also wanted to find an example of the sort of character who crops up in the darker stories about cyberspace: the one in which an unacknowledged desire meets an unexpected end. I wanted to take a dare. What I found was Burger. In his profile, Burger described himself as a "married male (Cyber-domestick).

ing/Training Errors: Women Discipline as well
 named Spanking, Restraint, Scolding, Your Mas-
 ter Commands: Students & Novices OK."

I wasn't ready to get in touch with Raviger immediately. I felt too exposed, too visible when I first went on-line. I tried to find my voice in the chat rooms first.

To click into AOL's People Connection is to enter a babel of voices—angry, beguiled, demanding, tentative—a fractious hive of personalities oblivious to any urge but the one to be heard. I lurked around the chat rooms, watching the conversations unfold by too afraid to participate.

It was disconcerting. I thought of myself in person as a pacifist. On the screen, I disappeared. At least momentarily. Did no one bother to register as conscientious, not in "Men with Minds" or "Tigerheart Dangers" or "Cops Who Fly"? I was wounded when no one sent me an instant message—the on-line conversational tool by which members can privately chat up someone whose screen name or profile appeals to them. I was annoyed that AOL had returned me to the level of self-esteem I had lost enjoyed in high school, where my social graces were roughly equivalent to those of a second grader. And that's a problem.

Chagnon, I turned to Penicill. With her, there was a chance I wouldn't take social biology quite so personally. Still, I braced myself. What if no one wanted to talk to Penicill, either?

I shouldn't have worried. If there is one thing I now know from life on line, it's that a girl need never lack for companionship if she includes the letters OTK in her profile. It no longer had to pre-

sent myself in a chat room—the mere act of bringing me to the attention of an astonishing vast and wondrous eager to discuss a subject that hadn't any personally relevant way since I was seven.

They're close, flashing on my screen, in aquatic near-life bonds, demanding my attention: *PopuPanda* and *FernFind* and *StoXU*. At first, a discount was about what I had expected—"Aye!" pretty much summed up the preferred option of some of my admirers—but, on the whole, surprising was the cautiousness: number of smart, new people who liked nothing better than chat strings about the beauty of a new life being shared; my electronic mailbox would be full of letters from those who had been cruising the profiles, if someone gave life a try. Even my junk mail got me going. I found my name unobscured in an online search the first of November (11/20/00), and I'd

Cyberpunks use a language all its own, born from weaving and speech: telegraphic, emphatic on the surface at least, unrelaxed. "Hi... want to discuss spanking or bare back? when was was how are conversations with a man called begin? Not having much to offer on that score. I'll tell me about his last encounter, which he



Small Inhabited: Photographs by Anne Hansen's Subterranean [View as the Project Here](#)

grate. But it wasn't long before the person behind the screen name began to bleed through the persona he had created: until the conversation anagram began to sound like one the Marquis de Sade might have had at a college retreat.

"Now you tell me one," Ausubert requested. And as if it were a bedtime story, I began:

"There was a man — He took me over his knee,
raised my dress, lowered my —"

'Ah, yes. How old are you?'

Worthy Inc. And you?

14. "Forty-one. Did he use his hands or a belt?"
 (A look. From one black headmaster to the other, an eye on eye.)

Alek: It was not black leather—he let a guy on my butt back. Where do you live?

'Upper East Side, I'm so excited'

¹He alternated the blows with caresses until I was

quiet fully

*What do you do for a living?

*There was a school for us adolescents. I have a nice

I logged on every day I checked around for Ravager—he was often on-line but never in a chat area, nowhere I could observe him in action. Meanwhile, I was nursing confidence.

paper lining us against our will, pretending us with a risk-free way to slip the leash. Was there something about cyberspace that unlocked hidden doors—in the psyche, in the flesh? Because with it came answers to several unasked

In her book *Life on the Screen*, the social scientist Sherry Turkle sees the computer as nothing less than a revolutionary metaphor that has effectively shattered our notion of identity just as we can work on multiple projects on a computer screen through the use of discrete windows. Turkle argues, too, identity can be divided among as many roles. We are, each of us, a collection of selves rather than a self, no one of these more and than any of the others. As one of the subjects in Turkle's book recently said, "Real life is not one more window."

Was it? I went on-line to find out what happened to identity—to my identity, at any rate—in an era in which I could be anyone. There was something frightening, criticizing about the possibility of throwing myself into a crowd.

All screen names other than *Paragel* and *Dorothy* have been changed to ones that did not exist at the time of the writing. *Ranger's* full name and some descriptive details have been changed.

she was bold and funny and a much faster typist. She asked the questions I didn't ask. She could exchange snappy comebacks with the best of them and put down the worst with a dismissive back of her verbal hand.

SHE LISTENED TO DarcyB6 tell her about the speaking he would give on one Cape Cod beach, she created the "It's More Over 40" chat room and advised housewife fifteen-year-olds on how to get gals. She dangled a pair of NYU freshmen with her physical dispassion (she borrowed heavily from the TV character *Nurse*) and her pronounced ability to drive their innermost thoughts. (Lucy—who da think of it?) She sympathized with a lovely cocktail waitress newly transplanted to L.A.

Back there was an alley I had yet to explore. I had not yet had cigarettes.

Her name was Donna. We met in a chat room, by any one, perhaps. A friend of mine who was also in the room told Donna that I was an expert seductress who would make her the happiest of women if she would join us in a private room, where we could type to one another beyond the reach of other eyes.

I don't really get cybersex—it seems a ludicrously self-conscious way to find pleasure—but the lure of inventing yourself for someone is a powerful one and eventually the author in me brushed the theoretical/homosexual aside

"What would you like me to do
to you, Donna?" I typed, trying to
buy myself a little time.
'Seduce me.'

This wasn't much of a lead. But Donna was taking this quite seriously. "I am very nervous," she typed.

Her confession emboldened me, transforming me into the naive soldier "Don't be" I typed "I'll be slow and gentle."

Odd things began to happen to me. The less I told became delicious *galdy*. They produced a high all their own. They produced something else as well. In the end, the less yielded a trash.

Gradually I began to recognize Penaezgal. She had come along at a nervous moment in my life, one that found me between identities, unsure of my own place in the world. I began to realize that, much more than I wanted to admit, Penaezgal was a way to be in the world when I wasn't really sure who I was. I found myself turning to her personality—cocky, hip, straightforward—whenever the uncertainty in my own life became a little too frightening. Penaezgal was visible when I was invisible and increasingly I turned to her voice the sought connection when I could not. Penaezgal wasn't me, not exactly, but she was so close to becoming a friend.

As were people I met on line. In one, the cartoonists became terribly unpleasantly three-dimensional, a sum of many parts. Directly, a sense of humor induced me to ask them questions—and before long I knew about his marriage and his kids and the delight he took from the bees growing in his garden. While the deconstructionist's romance with a fragmented self made for an elegant theory, what impressed me on-line was how obstinately one life, one personality, struggled to assert itself. Was all the talk just another engine driving the hunger for connection, for a sympathetic heartbeat in the late-night cry?

AND THEN, ONE DAY, it happened: I got an instant message from someone I had never heard from before: "Pardon me," he began politely, "but could you tell me what OTK means?" Like Nick Carraway the first time he is asked a

typed I smiled. Damn, I decided was easy

"No."

"Good. Then I'll just cup your breasts in my hands for the moment and kiss you gently on your lips."

"Yes, yes."
Now I'm slipping my hands under your shirt, and I'm
feeling your nipples.

"What?"
 "Oops, nipples."
 "You are driving me crazy."

Abundantly, I was quite proud of myself. But here I am, I had pretty much forgotten about Donna altogether, or, for that matter, the fact that I was meant to be having a second encounter. I was aroused by the literary challenge of it. I searched deep for short, descriptive, and easy-to-read adjectives. I kept typing, barely looking up from the keyboard until I noticed that Donna had been silent for some time. Instead, my *harem's* name popped up on the screen.

"Uh, yes," she left," she typed
 "Whaaa?" I typed, stunned, disoriented and
 "Probably got bumped off. Let's go shopping."

DETERMINED WAS READY SHE WROTE TO RANGER 'I

The next morning, his answer arrived. It was headlined, "Captive Treasure, Are You?" The writer was sophisticated, confident, and yes, masterful. "There may be something possible here," he wrote. "I will need to know more right off, however."

Rayner wanted to know what my "interests" were.

Had I fantasized about spanking? Serious playing with clamps, wax, or crotch? Bondage, "suspension"? Rubber fetish clothes? "Panted" sex? Private scenes in public places? "There are other, more intense fantasies, as you know." Savage wrote, assuming a level of expertise that was more flattering than accurate. "But include them only if you are really turned on by spanking of them."

Partridge threw his back. "I'm a traveler in your world, though strongly attracted to it. I have thought, fantasized, and wondered about submission. I have never acted on it-in part because I have rarely met men who might show me the way." I described some fantasies for him—more real, some designed to intrigue him. I left the furthest open. "I don't know what they might end up including as I explore this path. I should say that part of the appeal for me is resistance—my resistance and that resistance being overcome. I don't know if resistance is a classic part of such play, but it is very much a part of it for me."

I wasn't sure how honest I was being with Row-
age. I was walking in an unknown place, along the

you settled borders of personality, where half-truths, unbridled Jungian myth, adolescent guesswork, and ancient archetypes danced for moments in some reptilian, midlife carnival. Pinnegri gave me permission to explore something I might otherwise have ignored. I was interested in the world of dominance and submission for it was also true that I was capitalizing on the character I had created, an unstable narrator who would tell me what he thought. After a time I wouldn't at all state whether it was being *Jeany* I enjoyed, talking in her voice, on the power of having created the voice. I could see clearly how people fell in love on AIDS—no sex with the person, just some communication with her, but the person they had created for themselves.

Our correspondence continued. He signed his letters, "Master." They were elegant, crisp, thoughtful, funny. Ruyter was clearly an experienced player in what he always referred to as "the scene," but he was also a very conscientious and at times obvious participant. He was my Schizoidzoid, as I was his—he was not a mere, possible scenario involving novel subterfuges and

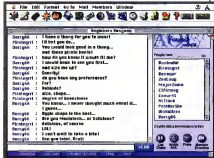
their dominant teachers, designed to test my limits, to see where it would draw the line.

The trouble was, I didn't draw one.

AROUND THIS TIME, I received an e-mail that scared me. "I want to blow away the studies that kiss from the tip of my rifle," it began. "I want to put my booted foot on your chest—just before your last breath of air." Who had written that? Was it Kevorkian? Was it the guy with the best guitar? Was it someone I knew posing as someone I didn't? Jerry took a powder and the middle-class white girl in me came occasionally to the fore.

I shot off a letter to AOL member services—which was very attentive and helpful but couldn't do much about the perpetrator because the message was coming from a different service provider I got in touch with the service provider—one Sean Rafter, proprietor of wuzat.net, who basically told me it was my own damned fault for corresponding with wuzat. Rafter was an extremely unpleasant man, but in the end he did let slip some valuable information: "Why are you so worried," he answered, "about a letter from a message girl?"

A few days later, an e-mail arrived, filled with apologetic "I am so embarrassed," the sender, apparently a young



It's hard not to view America's colleges as what rooms sound like the *Mercado de Indias* at a college mixer.

woman, wrote, explaining that the threatening letter had been intended for a friend of hers with a women's name similar to mine and that I had got caught up in a long-term pale between two friends. Feeling a twinge of sympathy for the girl's parents, I replied, which was the [continued on next page]

S U M M E R F I C T I O N
BY MICHAEL CHABON

THE HARRIS FETKO STORY

WHO CAN SAY WHAT PASSES FOR LOVE
BETWEEN A FATHER AND SON?
A COACH AND HIS QUARTERBACK
TAKE IT INTO OVERTIME.

The hotel in Tacoma was a Livingston Park. There was one in Spokane, one in Great Falls, and another in downtown Saltonstall. It was half motor lodge, half state-of-the-art conventional institution, antacid pink with gray tilt windows. There was a sink of rhinestone from the waterfall in the stream where the chimes of the elevators echoed all night with a sound like a dental instrument hitting a cold tile floor. A message from Norm Fetko, Harris's father, was waiting at the desk on Friday night when the team got in. It said that on the previous Friday Fetko's wife had given birth to a son and that the next afternoon, at three o'clock, they were going to remove his little forehead, of all things, in a Jewish religious ceremony to be held, of all places, at Fetko's car dealership up in Northgate. Whether by design or hotel policy, the message was terse, and Harris's invitation to his half brother's bar was only implied.

ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEIGH KUNZ



When Harris got upstairs to his room, he sat with his hand on the window. The message of four years since his last contact with Felko had done little to incline him to forgiveness. He needed, as did most commentators on the Harris Felko story, to blame his father for his own poor character and the bad things that had happened to him. He decided it would be not only best for everyone but also highly satisfying not to acknowledge in any way his father's attempt at renewing contact, an attempt whose meaning, weak as it might be, was borne of long experience. Harris suspected in once.

He picked up the receiver and dialed Bob Badham. There was no answer. Harris sat on the receiver down on the floor of his room—it was in his contract that he got a room to himself—lay down alongside it, and spaced out the one thousand abdominal crunches he had been spacing out every night since he was eleven years old. When he finally finished, he got up, went into the bathroom, and looked at himself in the mirror with approval and disapproval. He was used from long habit to thinking of his body as having a certain monetary value or as capable of being transferred, mysteriously, into money; and if it were somehow possible, he would have paid a handsome sum to purchase himself. He turned away from the mirror and so down on the lid of the toilet to reveal the inside of his right hand. When his nails were clipped and filed square, he went back out to pick up the telephone. It was still ringing. He hung up and dialed Bob's work number.

Carewore, Bob," Harris said cheerfully to Bob Badham's voice-mail box. "I mean, hello!" He then left a detailed summary of his current whereabouts and telephone number, the clean result of his most recent shave and, and the next day, on the man's schedule, which was loose, a Holiday Inn, on July 5, Harris possessed the sort of world, forever gilt that attracted the gaze of harsh men and disciplinarians and the whole of his twenty-six years had been lived

under the regimens of hard-man Bob Badham was merely the basis of them. There was a knock at the door. Harris went to answer it in his pajama bottoms, hoping, not quite unconsciously, that he would find an attractive female member of the Western Washington Association of Marriage Brokers (here for their annual convention) come to see if it was really true that the formerly semiretired Harris Felko was in the hotel. "Why aren't you in bed?" said Lou Somersano.

THE COACH OF the Regina Kings club of the North American Professional Indoor Football League was not, as it happened, a hard-man. He indulged his players far more than most of them deserved—having them with his family when they went badly for games, reminding them birthdays, suggesting them to some moneys, phone their wives, pay their child support. He was an intelligent use of long experience who, like many coaches Harris had played for, believed, at this point in his career rather desperately, in the myth of the football genius, a myth in which Harris himself, having been named by a football genius, had learned by the age of seventeen to put no such value on the bit of the talent to reveal the inside of his right hand. When his nails were clipped and filed square, he went back out to pick up the telephone. It was still ringing. He hung up and dialed Bob's work number.

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of his glasses were beautiful in a way that raised his losing record. "You called your father?" "Left a message." "And you supposed to not be in person when you're home?" "I'm not home," said Harris. "Ethnically. My home is Seattle. We're in Tacoma." "Ethnically, and Lou. A word much beloved of fackpans." "Something to drink?" Harris went to the minibar. There was nothing in it except for a nothing for my father and a ghostly smell of candle. The minibar was always empty in Lacombe Plaza and in most of the other hotels the Regina Kings patronized. Often they were not even plugged in. "I'm supposed to have six bottles of mineral water," Harris said. He tried not to sound pedantic, but it was difficult, because he was feeling pedantic. "Yes," said Lou. "The lock of that?" Harris slammed the refrigerator door shut. "Every fuckin' time I walk into my room and open the minibar door, there's supposed to be six fucking bottles of mineral water in there." The damned door rebounded and banged into the wall beside the minibar. He handle grabbed a deep hole in the wallboard. Clumps of plaster splattered the floor. Harris ran his fingers along the edges of the hole he had made in the wall. A feeling of ruminate took over in his chest but with an old man's irritance, he caught it and nearly twisted to wreck. He turned to Lou, trying to look even of himself and his position. The myth was that Harris didn't even like mineral water, he thought it tasted like babies. But it was in his contract. "So, okay, tell me, it's just my business?" "Harris, in a business or two there's someone coming up here with a proposition for you." Just as he said this, there was another knock at the door. Harris jumped. "He wants to offer you a job." "I already have a job."

Lou turned up the corners of his mouth but somehow failed to produce a visible smile. "Lou," said Harris, and his hair started to point. "Please tell me the louie's not holding."

There had been rumors to this effect since before the season even began, attendance at games in all but a few sports-starved cities was declining

by a thousand or more every weekend, the owner of the Portland team had been succeeded by Las Vegas wingtips, and the Vancouver team on whose line of credit the NAFIFL depended for its opening costs was under investigation by the government of Canada. Lou cracked the back of his hand. "I just want to play out the schedule," he said sadly. "I could be happy with that."

"Harris?" said a man on the other side of the door. "How there?" Harris put on his pants and went to the door.

"Oly," he said. He took a long look into the room. The man at the door was enormous, six feet eight inches tall just shy of three hundred pounds. Like Norm Feltz, a member of the 1992 national champions and—like Feltz—a successful businessman, purveyor of a popular topical analysis, Oly Oldham had always been the largest man Harris knew, a drunk of the northern cup, a piece of masonry fifteen tons of stone, oak and granite supporting eight cubic inches of grinning blond head. He wore silver aviator eyeglasses and a custom-tailored suit, metallic gray, so large and oddly proportioned that it was nearly unrecognizable as an article of human clothing and appeared rather to have been designed to smother an obese person's circa deplorable or to keep the dust off some big, delicate piece of medical imaging technology. "How's my boy?" said Oly.

IT HAD BEEN ELY Oldham's money, more or less, that Harris had used, more or less without Oly's knowing about it, to purchase the pound of cocaine the police had found under the rear bench of Harris's 300ZX when they pulled him over that night on River, 30 Avenue. He gave Harris's lived a sequence that compressed the very bones. "So," he went on, "the coach has got himself another son after all these years. That's a thought, isn't it? Wonder what he's got cooked up for this one."

This remark angered Harris when the upcoming world for two became and disappointing college seasons had followed at Frankenberg. Among the failures of his character exposed during that time was a total inability to

store up to musing about any aspect of his life, his father's experientialism least of all. With a great effort and out of an ill habit of deference to his father's comes he got himself to smile, then realized that Oly wasn't smiling, then at all. On the contrary, there had been in Oly's soft voice a disquieting smile of concern for the time, at his great old's hands, of the latest little Felko to enter the world.

IT HAD BEEN OLY'S MONEY THAT HARRIS HAD USED TO PURCHASE THE POUND OF COCAINE THE POLICE HAD FOUND UNDER THE REAR BENCH OF HIS 300ZX WHEN THEY PULLED HIM OVER.

"Yeah, he asked me out to the showroom tomorrow," Harris said. "To the thing where they, what's that, announce the bid?" "Are you people Jewish?" said Lou, surprised. "I didn't know." "We're not Jewish, not I guess has new wife must be." "I'll be there," said Oly. Gently—his knees were an ancient ruin of cartilage and were—Oly lowered himself into the desk chair, where he crinkled in apparent horror at the show approach of his massive behind. "As a matter of fact, I'm paying for the damn thing," Oly smiled, then took off his glasses and pinched the bridge of his nose. When he put the glasses back on, he wasn't smiling anymore. "The coach has got himself into a little bit of a tight spot out there in Northridge," he said, pressing his palms together as if they represented the terrific forces that were putting the square on Felko. "I know things haven't been well, the greatest between you two

soner... something that happened, but the coach—Harris, he's really putting his life back together. He's not—"

"Get to the point," said Harris.

An odd expression came over Oly's generally peaceful and immovable face. His eyebrows reached out to each other over the bridge of his nose, and his very pale lips compressed into a pout. He was unhappy, possibly even angry and Harris had

never imagined that Oly might ever be feeling anything but hunger and generosity.

"Harris, I'm not going to lie to you, the old man could really use a little help," said Oly. "That's what I want to talk to you about. I don't know if Lou has mentioned it, but the coach and I—"

"I told him," said Lou. "Harris isn't interested."

"Isn't he?" Oly looked at Lou, his face once again a region of blindness, his eyes pulled and overfilled. He had pleasure, vacant little eyes that, along with his bulk and a mope purchased in 1965 from a long dead Chinese herbalist in the International Domain for \$50, had enabled him to do what was necessary to raise Power Rub the number three topical analgesic in the western U.S. "Somebody might think he would be very interested in finding another job, seeing as how half of your job is about to go belly-up." He snatched his bushy eyes to-

wound Harris now. "Steering as how what they call painful employment is a condition of his parole."

"If that happens, and I don't personally feel that it will, Harris can find another job. He doesn't need any help from you."

"What is he going to do? He doesn't know how to do anything but be a gambler! It's in his genes, it's in his blood parcels. It's wired into his damn brain. No, I figure he has to be very interested in hearing about an opportunity like that. A chance to actually redefine the position, at twice his present salary, in favor of a guaranteed national audience of forty-four million homes."

HARRIS WAS ACCUSED of having his disposition discussed and his fate decided, in his presence, by other people; it was part of that same mysterious alchemy that could transmute his body into risk and of the somewhat less obscure process that had sent him to Elmhurst for nineteen months. But it is the nature of cable television, he could not reason himself.

"What is it?" he said. "What opportunity?"

O'ly reached into the breast pocket of his jacket and withdrew a manila envelope, labeled in half. He took a color brochure from the envelope and handed it to Harris. Harris sat down on the bed to read. It was a prospectus designed to attract investors to a league that would feature a sport that the brochure called *Powerball*, "the first new major American sport in a hundred years," to be played by every major city in the U.S., at a salary by no means in garish costumes that were part ancient armor and part costume. It had a line of who was disappointed, on the unadorned cover of the brochure, swooping across the playing arena from a striped repelling cloth. The description was vague, but, as far as Harris could tell, *Powerball* appeared to be an amalgam of rugby, professional wrestling, and old prize fights. It was not football or anything close to football. Once Harris realized this, he slumped through such phrases as "speed, drama, and intense physical action—the best elements of today's

most popular sports...our proposed partnership with the Wrestling Channel...all the elements are in place: revolutionary popular, and, above all, profitable..." until he turned to the last page and found a photograph of his father beside a caption that identified him as "coaching great Norm Perko, in veteran of *Powerball*, past owner and coach of the Seattle franchise."

"Perko invented this crap!" said Harris, tossing the brochure onto the floor.

"It came to him in a dream," said O'ly, looking solemn. He raised his hands to his eyes and spread his thick fingers, watching the air between them as it shimmered with another one of Norm Perko's insane visions. "A guy with a football under his arm...swooping from a rope." O'ly shook his head as if awestruck by the glimpse Harris's father had vouchsafed him into the mystic origins of the future of American sport. "This

sort cut in the *Business Belt* of 'Whole income, his 'revolutionary' energy foot ball, his brief *gamblering*, in retrospect) forty-two points as a candidate with no political connections, his attempt to bond and raise the greatest quarterback the world would ever see—had operated in isolation. They had all reaped it, hidden on the backs of, and ultimately broken a large number of other people. And around all of Perko's dealings and musings, O'ly O'Brien had hovered, loving, selfish, pouring his money down Perko's throat like liquor. "That's why he called. He wants me to play for him again."

"Imagine the media, Harris, my god," said O'ly. "Norm and Harris Perko reunited, that would sell a few tickets."

Low winced and sat down on the bed next to Harris. He put his hand on Harris's shoulder. "Harris, you don't want to do this."

"No kidding," said Harris. "O'ly."

HE LAY ON THE BED WITH HIS FOOT IN AN ICE PACK AND TOLD, AGAIN, THE SORRY TALE OF HOW HIS FATHER HAD RUINED HIS LIFE AND MADE HIM INTO ALL THE SAD THINGS HE WAS TODAY.

will be big, Harris. We already have a line on investors in nine cities. Our lawyers are working out the last few kinks in the TV contract. This could be a very very big thing."

"Big," said Harris. "Stah, I get it now." For he saw, with illumination and to his horror, that at this late stage of his career Perko had managed to come up with yet another way to ruin the lives and fortunes of hapless elements of men. None of Perko's other failures—the golf

he said to O'ly. "I hate my father. I don't want to love anything to do with him. Or you. You guys all fucked me over once."

"Hey, now, look. Another crack of grief opened in the glacial expanse of his face. "Look, you hate me, that's one thing, but I know you don't."

"I hate him."

Inside Harris Perko the frontier between puerility and age was generally left ungarrisoned, and he crossed it

now without slowing down. He stood up and went for O'ly, wondering if somewhere in the city interval between the big man's jaw and shoulder he might find a larynx to get his thumbs around. O'ly started to run, but his shamed limbs slowed him, and before he could regain his feet, Harris had locked the tiny chair out from under him. A sharp pain went whirling up Harris's shin, and then his foot began to throb like a trumpet. The right knee of the wooden chair splintered, from the front, the chair ripped, and O'ly O'Brien hit the flecked aquamarine carpet. His impact was at once loud and muffled, like the collision of a baseball bat and a suitcase filled with wool.

"I'm sorry," Harris said.

O'ly looked up at him. His meaty fingers wrapped around the broken chair leg and clenched it. His breath blew through his nostrils as loud as a horse's. Then he let go of the chair leg and O'ly took a short, sharp breath. "When Harris tilted a hand, O'ly took a short, sharp breath. "I just want to tell you something, Harris," he said, smoothing down his sleeves. He watched up his trousers by the belt, then attended to the loose slip of the shoulder pads in his jacket. "Everything the coach has, O'ly, is tied up in this thing. Not money. The coach doesn't have any money. So for the money is mostly coming from me. With a gross he snatched to remove the faded brochure, then slipped it back into an envelope.

"When the coach has said up in that chair, it can't be paid back or default of out or covered by a bridge loan." He tipped the rolled manila envelope against the center of his chest. "I'll see you tomorrow."

"No, you will not," said Harris as O'ly went out. He tried to sound as though he were not in terrible pain. "I'm not going."

Low lifted Harris's foot and bent the big toe experimentally. Harris gasped. A tear rolled down his cheek.

"You broke it," said Low. "Yes, Harris."

"I'm sorry, Coach," and Harris, falling backward on the bed. "Tucking Perko, now it's all his fault."

"Everything else, maybe it was Perko's fault," and Low, though he sounded doubtful. He picked up the telephone and asked room service to bring up a bucket of ice.

"This was your fault."

When the ice came, he filled a towel with it and held it against the right knee for an hour until the swelling had gone down. Then he tipped the big toe to his neighbor, pined Harris on the head, and went back to his room to revise the playbook for tomorrow. Before he went out, he turned.

"Harris," he said, "you've never confided in me. And you've never personally followed any of the copious advice I've been so generous to offer you over the last few months."

"Coach."

"No regardless of what, I'm foolishly going to make one last little try." He took off his glasses and wiped them on a rumpled towel. "I think you ought to go to that thing tomorrow." He put his glasses back on again and blinked his eyes. "As your brother or that'll be lying there with his little legs spread."

"Back the little bastard," said Harris, with the easy and good-natured calmness that, like so many about the game of football, had always come so naturally to him. "I hope they stop the fucking thing soon."

Low went out, shaking his big, sorrowful head. Ten minutes later there was another knock at the door. This time it was not a lady manager broker but a reporter for the *Morning News Tribune* came to poke around in the embryo of the Harris Perko confabulation. Harris lay on the bed with his foot in an ice pack and told, once again, the sorry tale of how his father had ruined his life and made him into all the sad things he was in. When the reporter asked him what had happened to his foot and the chair, Harris said that he had tripped while running to answer the phone.

THE NEXT MORNING AT 9, on a field goal in the last eight seconds of the game, Harris scrambled for the touch-down, kicked the extra point with his off foot, and then, when in the last minute of the game it became clear that none of the signing firm implements and large pieces of antique cannery which he made up his backfield and receiving corps

were going to manage to get the ball into the end zone, he himself, again with his left foot, nudged the last three points needed to keep them happy for one more day back in Regina.

WHEN THE TEAM came off the field, they found the King's corner, Irwin Selwyn, waiting in the locker room, holding an ashtray, a can of beer, and a pale blue envelope in the other, looking at his two-tone loafers. The men from the front office stood around him, working their Adam's apples up and down over the knits of their neckties. Selwyn had on blue jeans and a big yellow sweater with the word *WOLVES* in neon in blue. He took the ashtray from him, opened the blue envelope and unfolded the letter from the league office, which with terse, unceremonious elegance reprinted information the teams and players of the NAHFL had the standings at the end of that day's schedule of games would be duly entered into the record books as final Lou Sammarino, having coached his team to first place in its division and the best record in the league, wandered off into the showers and sat down. Irwin Selwyn shook everyone's hand and his team, given each player a set of fleshy wrenches (he owned a hardware store) and a check for what the player would have been owed had Lou Sammarino been gassed but only returning alive. Shortly thereafter, twenty-five broken guitars cringed out to the parking lot with their necks wrenches and caught the bus to the rest of their lives.

Harris went back to his room at the Lexington Park, turned on the television, and watched a half-hour commercial for a household vacuum device that showed the bellies of beds and sofas of their eternal wool of dust. He watched his underpants in the sink. He drank two cans of diet root beer and ate seven Slim Jims. Then he switched off the television, pulled a pillow over his forehead and began to



Accidental apostrophe:
Brock took heed
that in Washington,
professional center
does amount to history

CONFESSIONS OF A RIGHT- WING HIT MAN

He pilloried Anita Hill, and all the conservatives cheered. When he made *troopergate* a household word, he was ordained as the one who would bring down the Clintons. Then the author discovered the truth about his so-called friends

By David Brock

I KILL LIBERALS FOR A LIVING. OR AT LEAST I USED TO.

On the day last fall that my book on Hillary Rodham Clinton came out, I received a voice-mail message from a friend, Barbara Olson, a Republican lawyer who was working on Capitol Hill, investigating the firing of the White House Travel Office workers. A few months before, under a white tent in the leafy Republican suburb of Great Falls, Virginia, I had been a guest at the wedding of Barbara and Ted Olson, the Washington superlawyer who counsels President Reagan and *The American Spectator* the magazine where I work, among his clients. On hand was the entire anti-Clinton establishment, everyone from *Wall Street Journal* editorial-page editor Robert Barley to Whitewater independent counsel Kenneth Starr.

SUMMER FICTION
BY RICHARD BAUSCH

SOME- ONE TO WATCH OVER ME

IN VINO VERITAS,
THEY SAY—BUT
SOMETIMES THE
DRINK COSTS
TOO MUCH, AND
THE TRUTH TOO.

Here are Marlee and Ted, earned the yule nights, walking into the fire at New Baltimore, to exclusive establishments on the main street of this little village in the Virginia hunt country. Ted's ex-wife, Tillie, recommended the place, calling it the perfect surroundings for spending a romantic evening. A wonderful setting in which to celebrate an anniversary. The fact that it was Tillie who

ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL DAVIS



did the recommending is something Marlee didn't know about until five minutes ago.

They get out of the car and walk across the parking lot in the cool, early-morning sun. Ted's hand rests just below her elbow, guiding her, and she moves a little to step away from him in the foyer of the restaurant, they are greeted by a tall, long-faced man, the coldest two men and leads them into a dim corridor where walls are lined with the heads of staff, some small and heavy like fringed paintings. The paintings around Marlee of the ones in the student union at the University of Illinois, where she was a part-time student when she met Ted, only eighteen months ago. It seems weird returning to him—it's something to say anyhow.

"These remind me of the union," she says.

Her husband gives her a puzzled look. He's coming up older than she is, and this is an expression she has become fairly accustomed to.

"The paintings," she says. "The student union at Illinois has paintings like this. It's like they were all done by the same artist. I wonder who these people are."

"Madison," Ted says. "Adams. Monroe. They're presidents of the United States."

"Where's Lincoln?" she wonders. "Come on," Ted says, taking her by the wrist.

The long-faced waiter stands watching them from the entrance to the dining room. "This way, sir," he says.

Everything is dim. The room is low-ceilinged, there are dark wooden beams and heavy oak tables and chairs, a dark carpet. On the tables, the little candles in their holders give off almost no light at all. Marlee wants to be looking at Ted from outside the window, it's late. The waiter sees them, then takes Marlee's folded napkin, says it open, and carefully places it across her knees. He does the same with Ted's napkin. Then he moves off, and in a moment another waiter walks in and approaches them. He's also tall, but more angular somehow, leaning slightly as if his center of gravity were at the top of his head. He has widely separated small, dark eyes. There's something triangular about his face. It's as if even that to Marlee seems a little ridiculous—it's very

high pitched and thin, like that of a boy—the sides of his head seem to be the same. Ted nods. Marlee covers her mouth with her hand and pretends to cough. "I feel like a Coke or something," she says.

The waiter is more quiet. Ted turns to him and says, "Bring the wine list."

"Yes, sir."

Marlee watches him smile back through the entrance. "Has he been bringing helpings?" she says. "Shit. He'll hear you."

"I don't think I ever had anybody put the napkin in my lap until I married you. Isn't that strange? A whole aspect of eating out, and I'd completely missed it. Can't get service like that at Rad Lobster."

He looks around the room. She can see that he's not interested in talking about Rad Lobster.

"Did Ted say what we should order here?"

"Sit and everything's good."

"Well, and Ted usually knows what's good, doesn't he. If there's one thing about Ted, it's his vast knowledge of all the good things there are to do and eat in the world. And he eats so wonderfully. I don't remember what I've seen such an elegant eater."

"There's no need to take that note, Marlee. I've known the woman since '94. We've friends. For God's sake, she's had four other husbands since me."

"Well, I think I'd still rather eat at Rad Lobster."

"Please," Ted says. "Don't embarrass me." He says this good-naturedly, like a joke.

"Don't embarrass you," she says. He touches her wrist. "Kidding," he says. "Come on."

"I do, though, sometimes, huh?"

He's quiet, frowning slightly, thinking. There's a way he has of seeming to appreciate her youth and beauty while being the tolerant older man, with knowledge of the world that's beyond her. "No," he murmurs finally. "Though, I do get a little puzzled now and then about what you're thinking."

"It's no mystery," she tells him. "It's our anniversary. I didn't really want your first wife involved." She pretends to take an interest in the menu. A big flagstone fireplace occupies most of the far wall, and to the left of the fireplace, French doors

lead out onto an open patio, groups of white-painted tables and chairs, potted plants, and statuary. No one else is around. "Ted'd think of a place was so good, it would be more crowded," she says.

"It's early."

The printed scroll at the bottom of the left-hand page of the menu contains the information that there is a cover charge of eighty-five dollars per person. "Do you see what I see?" she says. She reaches across and points to it on his menu. "Did Ted tell you about that?"

He starts at it for just the split second that answers her question.

Although by any standard of her experience he's quite well-off and has never really had to live without money, there is in his makeup a definite and visceral inclination toward parsimony, a trait that he intellectualizes and dismisses. She has often watched him pause, just as, before the small, minor, bank with himself, the fact is, it costs him emotionally to spend money, though he tries never to show it. During the past year she has become more conscious of the prices of things, and more careful about expenses than she ever was when she was on her own and living off what she could scrape up writing tables. It has been one of the surprises about being married to him, this constant worry over money.

When she was downtown, moving from place to place, she'd rarely given it a thought—never even had a checking account.

"Do you want to leave?" she says. "Absolutely not," he says.

"Eighty-five dollars just to come in the door and sit down, Ted. This doesn't have to put on a show for me."

Marlee, please.

The waiter comes into the room and walks over to them with the waiter's hat. "Would you like to order your appetizers, sir?" he says in that high-pitched voice.

"I'm afraid we will need a couple of minutes."

When the waiter has gone, Marlee says, "He actually speaks."

"He can't help it. Stop being so critical."

"I wasn't. I was observing the phenomenon. I didn't say anything to him about it. If I was being critical, I'd say something to him about it."

Id say "Hey, what's the deal on the fifty voice?" Or no, I'd say, "Your voice is almost as high as everything else in this place." There's a joke about that, isn't there? I can't remember how it goes."

Apparently, he's decided to try another take. "I love what the light just does to your eyes. They sparkle so."

"Like diamonds?" She smiles at him. This is something he said to her when they first met, and she teased him for it then.

"Okay," he says out of the side of his mouth, nodding.

"Maybe we can all them to pay for the water."

"Marlee, are you just going to keep on it?"

"Well, really. Eighty-five dollars again, and we haven't even ordered a Coke. Did you see his face when I said I thought Ted had a Coke? Don't they love Cokes here? Can you imagine what the rooms cost? It's a goddamn us to sit down in the restaurant, using us taking up a whole room for a whole night."

"Will you please change the subject," Ted says.

The waiter comes back, leading another couple. A big, grey-haired man and a very skinny older woman. The waiter sits them on the other side of the room. The big man clears his throat with a pretty pronounced "Aha." He does it two or three times, then leans back in his seat and, addressing the waiter familiarly.

"You're staring at them," Ted says. "I'm wondering what they do for a living, and are they going to take a room."

"Ted reserved a room for us," she looks at him. "No."

"She did—it's part of the surprise."

Adams pause for a few seconds. He says, "Don't you want to say?"

"I think I'd rather go to Italy. I'd be about the same, don't you think?"

"Come on," he says. "It's our anniversary. We ought to splay a little."

She hesitates. Then she looks at her head. "No."

"It's the money, isn't it," he says. "You still can't seem to get it through your head that I have the means for us to do something like that."

It strikes her that he's almost cheerful, having won his struggle with himself. "You're sweet," she says. "You don't

want to spend that kind of money."

"Well, he is," he says. "I want to. Don't you believe me?"

"I believe you. I don't want to say 'hate'."

"You didn't want to spend the money. I can see it in your eyes."

"There's nothing of the kind in my eyes. There's diamonds in my eyes."

"Come on," he says. "You're worried about the money—you've been talking of nothing else since we came in here."

"I don't care about the money. You can't pay the money. It would cost on this table and light a fire with it. I don't care about it, okay?"

"The quiet," he says. "Remember when you are."

"Please," Ted says. "Remember when you are."

"The quiet," he says. "Remember when you are."

"Please," Ted says. "Remember when you are."

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"Please," Ted says. "Remember when you are."

"Please," Ted says. "Remember when you are."

A moment later, she says, "Where was Ted when you talked to her?"

"She called from Las Vegas, but she was leaving there. Said she'd lost several thousand dollars and the people she was with were doing even worse. But they were leaving. She was going with them to L.A. and then maybe up to San Francisco."

Marlee searches her mind for something neutral to say.

"I don't understand why you have such a problem with Ted."

"Who has a problem with Ted? I would want to be your sister, that's all."

"That was my idea—Ted only suggested the place."

"They look at their menus."

"It's going to be very good,"

"PLEASE," TED SAYS. "DON'T EMBARRASS ME." HE SAYS THIS GOOD-NATUREDLY, LIKE A JOKE. "DO I EMBARRASS YOU?" SHE SAYS. HE'S QUIET, FROWNING SLIGHTLY. "NO," HE MURMURS FINALLY. "BUT I DO GET A LITTLE PUZZLED NOW AND THEN ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE THINKING."

he says "You'll see."

"Why didn't you ever marry Ted? All those years before you met me?"

He frowns, studying her. "Look, who's bothering you?"

"Nothing's bothering me," she says, loud enough for the couple at the other table to hear. This comes from both to guess.

"Have you decided what you want?" Ted asks.

"I'm not that hungry," she says. "Actually."

"Marlee, stop pouting."

"I don't know what you mean," she says.

"I think you do."

Picking up [continued on page 100]

BY GEORGE PLIMPTON

Between the Lions

What makes
Elizabeth Hurley purr?
Would you believe Graham
Greene, Vladimir
Nabokov, and men
who are
slightly loony?
Probably.

I WANTED TO ASK ABOUT the lions. She was going to pose with them the next day—a play on *Henry VIII*. She grazed me at the door of her hotel room—tall, long-limbed, a black Swiss army watch loose on one wrist, she was wearing tight Levi's and an Italian-designed shirt with a curious mix of purple and turquoise rabbit fur. "Henry," she said, stroking it with her long fingers.

"What about the lions?" I asked.

"Absolutely. I'm frightfully excited. You must come to the studio and watch," she added with alarming directness.

Her energy is almost palpable. It seems to diminish the size of the room. Her voice sweeps about as a terrific chip, full of ebullient expressions ("fab," "cool") with the qualifying words strongly emphasized, as in "It's so cool." "It caused a major storm," "I've read it before of course." All of this so heavily accented in her native tongue that on the David Letterman show last night she mimicked her pronunciation of *Prozac* for "Frog."

Over lunch, which she ordered up to the room, we talked about books. She said she read voraciously. As teenagers, she and her sister Kate would buy a book and read it together on a bed, which meant that each had to learn to speed read or the other would turn the page too quickly.

She smiled and mentioned that her longtime lover, Hugh Grant,

was "a very slow reader. I badly hurt his mind, which must be infuriating, because he went to Oxford and I never went to college. He's been reading *The Odyssey*. He's been reading it for a very long time," she added. "Hugh claims he overread when he went to Oxford—read, read—and had a whole period when he couldn't read anymore. In fact, he's extremely well read. I read an excellent book the other day, a biography of C. S. Lewis, by one of Hugh's teachers—oh, who is it? ... he wrote *The Screws of Paradise*—A. N. Wilson."

"Is that typical of a book you'd take on a trip?"

"Two thirds of the books I take with me are those that I know and love. I read them over and over: Graham Greene, *The End of the Affair*, all that heavy gloom and doom Catholic stuff. I love that. Evelyn Waugh, *Brinkleyham* reminds me of my home of his earlier ones, *Decline and Fall*, make me

smile with laughter. I suppose it's a lack of imagination, but I love rereading more than I like reading. I know the plots, but that doesn't make any difference. I want the style. I love details in books. When I first met Hugh, we had a bet, which was a Carter watch, about a line from one of Nancy Mitford's novels—what one of the children says to her father. I knew I had it right, so I knew I could bet anything. I won the watch. It's back in London. This watch I'm wearing I bought on an airplane two weeks ago. I can remember seeing in books. I can remember what girls are wearing in every scene. Nabokov was like that—possessed by detail, the beautiful tiny details. You can buy plots in cheap books in any bookstore. He remembered his students: "What was the wool paper like in Emma Bovary's bedroom?"

I broke in to ask about her favorite (continued on page 116)



PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK DEMARCHELLEN

LIVING IN HOLLYWOOD
CAN BE TOUGH. BUT DYING
THERE CAN BE BRUTAL.

THE LAST CUT

Stephen Lang was English, a film editor, a man of only forty-one who nonetheless had good reason to fear that he'd be dead within eighteen months. He was running late even before the BMW's engine failed, and he found himself putting to a halt on Santa Monica Boulevard. He thought about calling for a cab on the cellular but swung the car into the curb before it died completely. He got out, blinked at the cruel noonday glare, and decided to take a

ILLUSTRATION BY SAUL SLOAN



chance, consigning himself to the bus that had just pulled up at the curb. Its door shouldered open with a hum.

The bus was crowded and hot. He sat near the door with his head between his legs trying to catch deep breaths, leaning his face toward a half orange that someone must have dropped on the floor, so tar canvas could bring back the fight he'd had with Jake, their two-year-old, at breakfast. Jake had wanted to drive at the car with him. "Look," Long said. "The way, but Daddy has to go to work. We'll go for a drive together later, okay? I promise, sweetheart, okay?" Jake stared at him with a scold's stare and furrowed understanding, tossed his mane of asper-segmented blond curls, and proceeded to disembowel the expensive Premio biography Long had left on the coffee table. "Look," Long screamed, flled for a moment with a comendous rage. "Daddy's not a comendous man."

Jake had howled while Alexandra, who was five, bowed on her French seat, saying matter-of-factly to Long's wife, "Daddy's being unreasonable again."

In addition to Jake and Alexandra, in addition to his heart's faltering rhythm, Long had pressing money problems and a Swedish wife, Anna, a tall photographer he'd met at the wrap party for a movie they both worked on. They fell in love at once, at his momentous wrap party, and Long first thought, though she later said that she'd been the one to bug him, as she would a monkey with her camera. Long never really contained the mix of whether he was worth bugging. "Don't tell yourself stories," she said. "I bugged you, I bugged you." He told her that when he died and wanted her to find someone else and wed again as soon as possible, but he couldn't get used to the idea that the three of them, or even the four of them if Anna took his advice, would all be laughing, talking, working in places he knew, and he'd be—alone? He was afraid the kids would forget him entirely. He'd have no place in the memories of those he'd loved without a sister. A couple of nights ago, lying in bed while a hot dream seared across their skin and melted the window, he said to Anna, "So what'll he be like, this new husband of yours? He'll probably be a Swedish guy, right? He'll taking it that you'll go back to Swe-

den. Brian make sure that he's rich?" He said to say this lightly, but Anna was dead, looking at him out of very blue eyes, wishing she could help, urging him not to get into this. "A wealthy Viking. Perhaps Bjorn Borg is available." They fought, which must have been his goal, and in the end they both cried, he supposed he'd wanted that as well. It was no longer an issue whether they were happy or not. They clung to each other.

On the bus he became aware of two voices behind him.

"If I were you, I'd shut up, if I were you," said the first, a man's, boiling with affront.

"Fuck the police," said the second, also male, but in a dry's oddly precise and almost delicate way.

"Yeah, right, you go out and tell them fuckin' sculptin' body."

"Shut up, then."

"You want the fuck up, then?"

"Can you cut me up?" The words seemed to creep on wary tiptoe, defying all that logic.

"Oh, my. You're big, bad, and tough."

"Yeah, I'm bad. I'm Mister Bad."

Long suppressed a laugh. He wanted to turn and check out these characters but thought he'd better not. A friend of his had been assaulted on a bus the previous month. He was beaten about the head, trying to remember what it was like that happened, asking to grasp those chaotic details. Long realized he couldn't. He was so tired those days his consciousness was like a threshold man. He'd lost a lot of weight. He was pale, with dark rings under his eyes. As physical stuff, he was breaking down.

"I'm Mister Bad," repeated the second man, "and who are you?"

"You're fuckin' nobody. That's what you are."

"Are you nobody?"

"If I were you, I'd be quiet."

"I'm not you," said the second man, winning every point even if he was out of it or muted.

"I'm wasting my time with you, fuckin' body."

"I will fuck you up," the second man said with very confidence. "I will fuck you up."

"See my finger? See how big it is? It's right here in your face, pal, and the first voice, angrier than ever."

"I will fuck you up," said the second, unperturbed, and Long wanted to giggle. He smiled and had to hold his nose.

"Let's go, then. This fuckin' stop."

"I don't want to fight."

"Oh, no. You're big, bad, and tough."

"Yeah, I am. What are you going to do about it?"

"What are you going to do about it?" said the first, trying to shame the other's strategy.

"I will fuck you up," the second man said, "I don't wanna hurt you, dude. I wanna fuck you up."

Long for the moment forgot about his debts, the hole in his butt, even his children, and with his head between his legs, laughed as hard as he began to squeeze from his eyes. It reminded him of a Mel Adler film.

In recent years he'd film only for Mel Adler, a dull, balding guy who was one of Hollywood's leading directors of slapstick comedy. Adler's films featured plenty of screaming, the destruction of property on a Potomac scale, and characters who got their tongues stuck in spread cases trying to lick out the last drops of tomato juice.

But now Adler was taking twelve months off. He was going back to college to complete his thesis on Shakespearean tragedy, so Long's agent had had to find Long to meet Paul Segrue, the Oscar-winning actor and filmmaker. Adler was personal, chosen to go to get everything he'd been told about Long's heart condition and counsel reasoning on the idea that Long, having reverted to some original English nobility, now wanted to work on out-of-control movies with a bogus veneer of class. He said, "Go ahead, go into bed with the scotch-bag. But just let me warn you."

All that stuff about Segrue being a giant liberal and conservationist? It's bullshit. There's a character of the Arctic Circle where his heart should be. He'd rape a nun with a redwood if he thought it would help him get a better deal on his next picture."

He'd worried Long that it was his, that's to say Long's, funeral.

"Hey, what the fuck?" said the drunk with the dairy voice. "Do you see that guy?"

"What guy?"

"That guy."

"Which fuckin' guy? Do I look like I'm fuckin' guybros to you? Sculptin' body?"

"The rich-looking guy."

Long was tall and thin and usually thought, how ungainly he must look, with his unkempt hair and slightly hunched-back posture, but now he was suddenly aware only of his leg's chafe, his jacket of soft and closely expensive Italian leather, and this intense laughter he was helpless to control. He realized how lucky and privileged he must look to these guys. He wanted to explain that he was like them, he was their brother, also tricked by fate. For a wild moment he felt like wailing the wail to the entire bus that he'd overestimated himself on a mortgage he could no longer in sure, that he'd made wretched but unwise investments, that his medical bills would require a Hitchcock to new freedoms of anxiety, that he'd recently survived three hours of testosterone surgery and his shuffling aftermath and the doctors, all of the doctors he'd seen unendowable especially in Chicago and Denver as well as Los Angeles—refused to risk another

reaching for his sunglasses. He'd landed himself on that anonymous stretch of Santa Monica Boulevard three or four blocks below Lincoln. There was used-car lots on every side. He was surrounded by a forest of blue and green plastic burning, rattling and clattering in the breeze. As Long saw it, he had three options: wait for the next bus, drive onto one of the shoulders and phone to call the apartment, or walk as fast as he could down toward the ocean and the center of Santa Monica itself. In the end, he chose to walk, it was a distance of only eight blocks now, but he was so drained and weak he made slow time in the sun, having to stop on every corner to rest his chest, and by the time he climbed the sidewalk steps outside the Spanish-style building that housed the office of Segrue's production company, he knew he'd made a mistake. His one left pulsed pocket, then the right, and realized to his horror—this was just

smile whose famous inaccuracy made Long dare she was about to strike him. "The Allman Brother," she said. "The president of the company. We're gonna have to reshoot."

Long smiled and tried to make further apologies, but neither of the women was looking at him anymore. Standing only a few feet from Long's face, they turned to each other, and the younger, still with her finger pointed against a check, said, "And anyway, now he seems to think he has a cancer as a professional writer. Isn't it grotesque?"

Long understood that they were snubbing him, that should be no second chance, whatever was said. He was dismissed. He felt a scorching pain in his chest and had to sit down, managing the first massage on the left of his chest where the heavy pack of the burning pocket was sewn beneath the skin. He felt through his left pulsed pocket, then the right, and realized to his horror—this was just

A IT THAT STUFF ABOUT SEGRUE BEING A LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIONIST?" SAID ADLER. "THERE'S A CHUNK OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE WHERE HIS HEART SHOULD BE. HE'D RAPE A NUN WITH A REDWOOD TO GET A BETTER DEAL ON HIS NEXT PICTURE."

apertures: the sharp, busy and of his permission, which for years had annihilated his heart's arduous beat, had slipped and burrowed down, scarring the tissue of the ventricle too badly to be repaired. Now he was forced to rely on drugs whose use offered only a narrow spectrum of safety.

He turned to see two men, one white with long, frizzy hair, the other black and bald, two faces as with fury.

"Hey, you, what you gonna' do?"

"Shit, gocky, gup, shit, gocky, gup, fuckin' anxiety, gup. See my bag, fat finger? You don't stop gonna' I'm gonna shove it right up your ass."

Long made for the door in a hurry, followed only by their frenzied cackles.

"Gocky?"

"Shit?"

The two lumbered away, leaving a relieved Long alone on the sidewalk.

inspiring the nervousness of Segrue's center that decorated the walls, and then two women came toward him on their way to lunch. The one on the left, the younger, was a tall medical wearing plaiden heels and a black trouser suit, while the other was older, dark, and dressed in jeans and a braided vest.

"I'm Stephen Long. I'm here to see Mr. Segrue." Glancing at the clock on the wall, he saw that he was more than an hour late. He ran a hand through his dripping hair. "I'm most terribly sorry. I got held up."

The two women were transformed in a moment from by League-educated, concerned into screams with their attitudes in despair, contented to a rehearsal of their next big angry scene: the punishment of the movement. The younger, the redheaded, held a finger to her cheek, sighing, while the older rushed forward with a

typical of his day—that held left his imbedded on the kitchen table after the fight with Jake.

"Excuse me," he said. "I need a glass of water." Neither of the women missed a beat. They neither said a word nor turned in his direction, while he stared at a framed poster on the wall for *Days of Wonder* that of Segrue's early films, showing that the story would spread across town and he'd never get another job in time. It was as if he'd already ceased to exist.

"The bedrooms," he said, waving an arm that felt as big and clumsy as a windmill. He arched through reception, feeling that he was leaving his own self behind, and found the door, beyond which came upon a middle-aged man turning away from the arrival, heading up his fly, and lathering his hands in front of the mirror.

"Adler," said Long, his chest on fire. "I need a [omitted on page 111]



THE AMERICAN EDGE

TOMMY HILFISER
Three-button wool-and-cashmere
coat, wool trousers, and
hat coat by Tommy Hilfiger

THE BEST OF AMERICAN DESIGN THIS SEASON EVOKES THE SLEEK, SEXY MOOD OF A FUTURISTIC FILM NOIR. NO TRICKS, NO FASHION GIMMICKS. JUST CLEAN, SPARE TAILORING THAT HAS A MODERN EDGE—BUT DOESN'T GO OUT OF STYLE BEFORE YOU GET HOME.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TEDDY WORD

PRODUCED BY JOHN MATHER



SHARP FOCUS

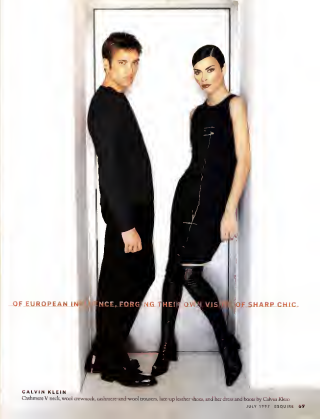
DONNA KARAN
Six-button wool coat,
wool trousers, lace-up
leather shoes, and her
dress by Donna Karan



IN MEN'S WEAR, AMERICANS HAVE EMERGED FROM THE LONG SHADOW

RICHARD TYLER

Pyrexia three-button wool suit, silk shirt, silk tie, suede boots, and her suit and boots by Richard Tyler



...OF EUROPEAN INFLUENCE, FORGING THEIR OWN VISION OF SHARP CHIC.

GALVIN KLEIN

Chastain V neck, wool crewneck, unlined and wool trousers, lace-up leather shoes, and her dress and boots by Calvin Klein



THREE-BUTTON
WOOLMIXED
COAT, WOOL
VANEER CREATES,
WOOL TURTLE-
NECK, FLAX FIBER
COTTON-BLENDED
TROUSERS,
AND SLACKS OF
LEATHER BOOTS,
HER CLOTHING AND
SHOES THROUGH-
OUT ALSO BY
JIL SANDER.

KNOWN FOR HER SPARE, ALMOST ZEN-LIKE WOMEN'S CLOTHES, GERMAN DESIGNER JIL SANDER INTRODUCES HER FIRST COLLECTION FOR MEN: SOFT, TWEEDY SUITS; SIMPLE SHORT COATS, AND LUXURIOUS KNITS. IT'S A BOLD, MODERN APPROACH TO TAILORING THAT DOESN'T SACRIFICE COMFORT OR FIT.



THREE-BUTTON
SINGLE-BREASTED
TWEED JACKET,
WOOL CREWNECK,
AND LEATHER
TROUSERS

Jack and Jil

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY HOUVE

STYLING BY JOHN MATHIAS

"It's artistic, yes, but masculine. I like tailoring, but I also want softness." —Jil Sander



FREE-BUTTON
JACKETED-BLIND COAT,
WOOL-REEL WOOL
CROWNECK, PLAYSUIT
WOOL-BLIND TROUSERS AND
JACKET (JIL SANDER)

STYLING BY ROBERTO COLO FOR JIL SANDER • HAIR: MARCO P. FOR JIL SANDER • MAKEUP: ANITA WILSON FOR JIL SANDER • JEWELRY: JIL SANDER • SHIRT: JIL SANDER • TIE: JIL SANDER • SHOES: JIL SANDER



SEE EDITOR
DOUBLE
BREASTED WOOL
SUITS IN THE
V-BELT
SWEATER
COTTON-SHIRT
AND SILK-AND-
WOOL TIE
FOR STROM
INFORMATION
SEE PAGE 116



Basic pinstripes, including a traditional stripe, from Tommy Hilfiger's Fall line, above. A street-fashion version of the chalk-stripe suit, with alternating black and tan stripes, from Richard Tyler for Byblos.

Pinstripes stand for rectitude and reliability, but they can also be cool. Today's designer versions are way hipper than the traditional banker's suit.

LEGEND HAS IT THE PINSTRIPE SUIT originally signaled the lines in ledger books used by bankers in the City of Victorian London, where money-men of all ranks hunched over their accounts by galgah. The orderly linear pattern thus came to be associated with reliability, forthrightness, and trustworthiness—all qualities one values in an accountant or broker. Eventually, lungs, capes, and capotes of industry adopted pinstripes as emblems of their power and authority, no matter how dubious.

These days we think of pinstripes and chalk stripes simply as decorative fabrics that have a nice dressing effect

while also conveying a strongly professional air. Women increasingly wear them, taking full advantage of both these effects. Now pinstripes are being adopted (or co-opted) by the young and hip. Pinstripes in this new context are not necessarily worn as a complete ensemble—and seldom with a dress shirt and tie. The striped tailored pieces serve as a new resource outside the executive suite, perhaps as a means of deconstructing the classic banker's suit while enjoying some of its graphic elegance.

This may seem an odd misappropriation of fashion imagery, but from a historical perspective it probably is not.

In the Victorian period, pinstripes almost certainly arose as part of a movement toward more casual clothing. They came into vogue in the 1850s and '60s, when men were making the transition from the formal black frock coat, worn with matching trousers, to the more countervailing "lounging suit," a considerably less restrictive outfit, composed of a jacket and matching trousers, from which the modern suit is descended.

At the time, there was a clear divide between town clothes and country clothes," says Robert Gieve, the fifth-generation owner of the Savile Row tailoring house Gieves & Haworth. "Town was dark, somber, functional. People were desperate to introduce color and pattern." So once the plain-weave cloth were introduced from prairie, which added a hairline pattern to woven wools, then chalk stripes, which appeared a broader stripe to the supplier thaned wools. "They give you the chance of wearing a conventional suit with decent decoration that could be worn in town," Gieve adds. (Gieve also

flies the theory that pinstripes might have arisen when the white herring stripes used in the construction phase of the canvas suit-making process were incorporated into the overall design.)

While it could be argued that nothing looks better than a pinstriped suit worn with a solid shirt, dotted tie, and revere-coll shoes, contemporary designers from Richard Tyler to Giorgio Armani have seemed determined to break up the ensemble, making a point of showing pinstriped trousers à la carte,

so to speak, without the pinstriped jacket. This is the manner young people have been making on the street—borrowing the chic of striped tailored wool but negating its power connotations.

Designer fashion has also changed the color and format of stripes. There are traditionally finer basic striped suit styles: pinstripes, chalk stripes, headed stripes, and midstripe. They are usually always in neutral, complementary colors, like gray or cream. But this fall, men will be able to find Paul Smith's otherwise classic three-button gray suit with alternating stripes of

helly green and bright blue, or Norton's gray flannel suit with chalk stripes of varying gauges. Tommy Hilfiger's fall-fashion presentation included an entire tableau of pinstriped suits, from brief, Guy and Dave's members to a dressy homosexual prototype.

The message in all these collections is that pinstripes have another suitably fashion dimension that endures and transcends social and economic patterns. Pinstripes stand for prudence, but they can also be cool. ■



PINSTRIPE
Pin white stripes created with white dye, or other forms in the warp of a woven fabric.

CHALK STRIPE
Thicker stripes, usually black. Based on chalk stripes found on newspaper news like flannel.

PENCIL STRIPE
Chalk stripes that are about as wide as pencil lines, often found on warm-weather suits.

PIN DOT
Very fine headed stripes that have space for some width or dot, found on dressy suits.

SHADOW STRIPE
Multiple years made with years of different widths, for a shadow effect. Associated with Brooks Brothers.

Woody Hochwender

The Equipment Stealthy Angler

This race for the cold war has brought about a global proliferation of weapons of fish destruction. (Maybe that fish reduction, since you, of course, probably eat much of what's caught and released.) Schools of new high-end fly rods from previously unknown companies—Tibor, Tibori, Rayall, Chatham, Baccus—are the talk of the industry and are going theories is that the following: "The fishing industry is now producing and selling parts for Black helicopters has left a lot of specialty machine shops looking for new growth markets." It doesn't hurt that a recent poll found fly fishing to be the fastest growing adult sport in the country. Meanwhile, established brands like Abel—which began making rods around 1900—have been updating their product lines to keep ahead of the competition.

The changes aren't just cosmetic, either. Husar's tools are lighter than others of comparable quality and durability. And the longer spend on Alor's new rapid remove tool will help you and your wrist keep the line taut when that twelve-pound lake shaver

decides to turn around and swim
strongly toward you for one yard.

The principal downside of defense downsizing is that the tradition of new and improved weapons coming along every few years is apparently over, forcing the red companies to make big claims about small changes. After a false start last year, Orion is focusing about perfecting the "small" antitank technology of its Trident rods. The slow

that vibration-dampening material in the grips minimizes excess wiggle, which can loosen your loop and cost you critical inches on your distance race. Meanwhile, Stage, maker of the rod of choice for parents who don't like the fact that Greys also sells flared sweaters and throw rugs, has come up with a "reverse compound" taper shaft designed to accommodate the oval (and/or heavier) flies without undue effort.

Before you count your peace dividends, note that the price war in fishing material has yet to heat up (though most rod manufacturers now must Chen's no-quarter-no-advice paragon). For instance, Alibi's top-of-the-line rapid-retrieve model, which for this concerns the company's position as the creator of real drama, costs \$1,150. Think of it as the Clio Winchester model.

—PAUL SCHMIDT

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

the male animal

FROM THE HEALTH CLUB TO THE HIGH LIFE—TWENTY PAGES IN THE WORLD OF THE MODERN MAN



The latest line of high-tech Egidio gear boots (clockwise from bottom left): Buser's 100 (3237) and 140 (3231), Axiel's PU 3 Perfor (3470), Ace 20 (3345), Wo 20 (3346) retrowe (3473), and PU 3 (3475). Note they're attached to the boots.

Hey, Mister, Can You Dunk?

The Setup

"Yo, what's your deal, the Dunker?" There it was again—the familiar greeting from the amiable resident street at my local asphalt court. The tag threatened to suck its sting courtesy of dunk, its sting courtesy of dunk. Because it was true. Although I stood a little over six feet, I could no more touch the rim than fly to the moon.

I was a late convert into the world of hoops. My ninth-grade gym teacher, Mr. Benyak, had tried to recruit me for junior varsity. "What are you doing with your hands?" he'd ask. "I'm using it to play chess." I'd answer. My attitude didn't improve until the 11th grade, when I moved to Tompkins Square in New York's East Village and found I had a bird's-eye view of the park's ball courts. Soon, despite my demonstrable lack of talent, I was regularly accompanying with friends and local kids.

Sometimes, on summer afternoons, I'd stand on the sidewalk and watch the bouncers engage in aggressive alley oop and dunking contests, feeling thoroughly outclassed as their very bodies soared through the ether. "Hey, man, the man-

year-olds would ask us if we couldn't layups, can you dunk?"

Resolving to do something about my vertically challenged state, I called the Sports Center at Chelsea Piers, which specializes in "sport specific" training. After looking me over, the Chelsea pros agreed to take me on as "a challenge."

The Deal

"JIMMIE ARLANT isn't so much about muscle strength as about balance between the different muscle groups, and flexibility," explained Erik Stevens, the center's fitness

director.

"All the parts have to work together seamlessly to create the action."

Stevens planned an intensive five-week training program for me with two Sports Center insiders, Paul Vitale and Tom Beersman.

"The first thing we do to build

After just five weeks of training, the author seems to have a closer affinity with the rim.

you a more efficient body," declared Vitale, a second-degree black belt in karate and a competitive body-builder. Initial tests gave me good marks for strength but found me wanting in flexibility and endurance. Vitale focused my training accordingly.

For the first time in my life I was instructed to sit more—on a bench and between-meal snacks.

I visited the lovely Sports Center complex five times a week, watching golf balls whiz like mini airplanes across the driving range next door as I went through my paces. After an aerobic warm-up,

Vitale would subject my legs and lower back to Acute Isolated Stretching, in which the muscles are stretched to the edge of their normal range of motion in quick repetitions, then pushed slightly beyond that range by the trainer. Stretches that at

first felt like intense rope burns quickly began to feel natural as I became more limber. Then we concentrated on strength training—leg presses, bicep curls—but in drills of fifteen or twenty reps to increase muscle endurance rather than mass.

Vitale noted that my right shoulder was unusually developed. I had had mild scoliosis since my teens—no big deal. Suddenly I felt like Quasimodo. Vitale prescribed corrective exercises, starting on the trapezius cuff. The posture I'd adopted was hindering my ability to leap—I tended to rely not on my legs but on the muscles in my lower back, which were somewhat overdeveloped because of my skewed stance. My posture soon improved noticeably, and I felt better-balanced. With Beersman, I began to work on jumping mechanics, jumping rope, and basketball drills.

We concentrated on developing more "explosive" power in my hamstrings, gluteals, quadriceps, and calves—one of the keys, I learned, to increasing my vertical leap. The exercises included the "Aren and Jolt" and a forward standing press designed for football linemen. Then we added plyometric drills.

Plyometrics is the system developed in the Soviet bloc countries that seemed to account for their dominance in track and field in the '80s Olympics. "When you jump, the muscles involved are being stretched and then compressed," says Greg Beersman, the strength and conditioning coach for the New York Knicks. "Plyometrics enhances the body's ability to absorb the shock of this motion." Beersman explained that there's a sensory mechanism called a spindles inside each muscle. With plyometric repetitions, the spindles' capacity is enhanced, enabling the muscle to contract

with greater force. Beersman says he's seen plyometrics yield dramatic results. Mark Jackson, the former Knicks point guard, added three inches to his vertical after six weeks of drills.

My plyometric drills included stepping onto a bench and jumping into the air over and over again, and jumping onto one box, down to the floor, and up onto a higher one until I wanted to puke. Most encouraging, though, were the drills on a machine called the Shredle 2000-1, in which I bounced repeatedly for thirty-second or one-minute intervals on a spring-loaded board as shooting points raced through my calves and thighs and my trainer shouted, "You're a bird! You're a bird!"

The Payoff

AFTER FIVE WEEKS of plyometric drills and the correction of my mechanics and posture, just how much had I improved? A visit at the Sports Center (accompanied by Seal's version of "Fly Like an Eagle" blaring from a tape deck) showed a gain of a good six inches in my jump.

The real test, of course, came back in Tompkins Square. It's not that my game's been completely transformed—I mean, we're not talking Space Jam if that's the never going to

shatter a glass backboard, okay? But I can jump and hook some fingers just over the rim, if not yet high enough to stuff the ball. Moreover—and I don't think it's my imagination—when the trainer calls me the Dunker, he doesn't deliver it with quite the same serious gusto.

—DANIEL FISCHER

it's not that my game's been completely transformed—I'm never going to shatter a glass backboard, okay?



LENN WOLFE

Organs

A Man and His Liver

Everyone understands the heart. Strandy Muscular Emeryville purpoze-fills sensibly chure-henral, it flumes blood reliably, with utter regularity. It's the super-father of the chest cavity, a truly Republican organ, strict to touch it we have only to thump our chests. But, quick, try the same with your liver. Touch your liver.

It's there, above your navel, ready on your right side, sort of—well, sort of everywhere.

HOW NOT TO CURE A BANGOVER
All sorts legal or illegal under-the-table say through the liver. Coralside celebrated Kama that could shake like a football of excite-enthusiasm are the focus of an all-night bender are not an invention on your night. Think, Kama there is no evidence that the central damage there is any although, even so, studies indicate that the combination of alcohol and aspirin increases the liver's ability to damage its liver. We know it's there and little more. But believe you knower down in the blood thirty years from age pills before it's too late. Your liver can flush you off.

of organs tonight, join your hand to your side and say a little prayer of thanks for your liver—

the largest, most important, and most misunderstood organ inside the human body.

If the heart is asked the father, then the liver is the mother of all organs. It makes us, for God's sake (your blood, anyway), and it protects us from ourselves. And what thanks does it get? We keep on with the gin and the aspirin and the food additives, counting on the liver to mop up the blood after our binges. It does so willingly, though most of us are killing our liver—just as we are our mother-in-law's small child.

When does the liver die, anyway? In an average day, it produces almost all the major components of your blood and detoxifies everything you drink, swallow, eat, snort, rub into your skin, or otherwise work into your bloodstream. It staples energy in the form of sugar into your acid, it stores vitamins and iron. It produces the clotting factor that seals you up when you bleed and the bile that breaks down the body and cures cheese you wolf down in the morning. The liver does it all. Rest. Advance the filmstrip.

To look at your liver fully, make an incision twenty-seven inches long diagonally across the



lower part of your chest. Pull back your ribs and vocalize. The working liver?

A healthy liver, with its rich burgundy hue, is a completely saturated web blood and has the consistency of a waterlogged bath towel. No pumping, no visible demonstration of activity, but each cell is a little Pacific Rim steamship of its own, in which are wing collect the sugar from the blood. Protein flakes, essentializing larger molecules, uselessly packaging them into starches, then storing these in inventory for later consumption. A byproduct of this process, bilirubin, passes on to the bile duct, which makes its way to the duodenum, where it serves to provide the pH for your feces. Healthy liver, drink this.

At the same time, back in our liver cell, another wing of the factory cuts out and discards the

stress poisons we all encounter, like the toxic androsterone you've been taking on for days now. The byproduct of this process is stored into urea, a frothy liquid with the potent bouquet of cat piss, outstowed by our little factory to the kidneys. These complex cells work away. Each is so dense that if you spread the membranes of a single liver cell edge to edge in front of you, they would cover this entire page.

So the liver just sits there, working its magic, provided you haven't converted too much of it into a useless white gelatin by sucking down too much of any form of alcohol. You know to avoid lined dishes on bed on the valves. You may not have the same pump when you rub back a guest, though you might want to see the garden for what it is. A single shot in the liver what a peaceful of chicken wings it is the liver. It eventually causes the liver to become fatty and choke off the supply of oxygen and nutrients to the blood.

There's no good news on this show. If you drink inconsiderately, you damage your liver. Forever. Unlike the lungs, the liver does not regenerate. Stop drinking and you put a halt to the damage. The liver will function on what it has left, but that's all you get.

But the truth is, genetics make you play the larger role in who develops cirrhosis. If your granddaddy sucked down corn liquor for seventy odd years, the odds are you can swell like a without compensation. Still, the American Liver Foundation recommends limiting yourself to

two drinks a day. We all have to make choices. But your liver, busy as you keep it with other things, would probably consider Boudier, who are you to argue with your mother?

—TOM CHIBRELLA

Six Warning Signs

Cirrhosis, an incurable ailment, remains fairly low profile for most of your life. You may have it now but not know it for twenty years. Your liver will continue to do its job without a lot of complaint until it's pretty much dead to the core. Still, there are signs to look for, including symptoms such as:

1. Yellowing of the whites of the eyes and slightly jaundiced skin
2. Chronic unexplained nausea and vomiting
3. Fluid retention, particularly in the abdomen, but sometimes in the legs or ankles
4. Enlarged liver, producing shortness of breath and a dull ache at the bottom of the rib cage
5. A consistent shift in the color of your stool toward a shade nearer coal—in a rather painterly way—gray
6. Decreased sexual appetite, impotence, and/or infertility

It's important to recognize that any one or even all of these symptoms is not a sure sign of liver disease. Should a doctor be unable to rule out other causes for these non-specific symptoms, a blood test called a liver function pattern will be ordered. The test gauges the level and type of stress you place on your liver, based on the presence and volume of certain enzymes. These patterns decide the next level of testing, which might range from more blood tests to tissue samples.

Precautions

Don't Drill Yourself to Death

ENTER NOW AND THEN, a seemingly inebriated young man is felled in the middle of some sporting event as if by the gods. Another congenital heart defect, you figure. But if it happens during the steamy days of summer, the tragedy may have an entirely different—and preventable—cause.

So concludes an analysis of more than ninety exercise-related deaths among U.S. military recruits. The researchers, led by Dr. Larry E. Smith of Howard University Hospital, found a striking explanation for a puzzling pattern. Such deaths often occur during running drills on summer mornings—well before the heat of the day. The deaths studied, it turns out, were upwards of fifteen times more likely to occur when the previous day's heat and humidity had reached oppressive levels. The latest explanation is that the recruits' muscles suffered "unrecognized overexertion," or heat stroke, and dehydration during the previous day's exertions, setting the stage for cardiac catastrophe the following morning, when drills resumed.

This conclusion stands to save more than a few future soldiers from fatal, albeit avoidable—but it could save you, too, from your own inner drill instructor. There's more reason than ever to insure yourself against heat illness. Stay fully hydrated at all times, and strap the sweat suit for loose, light clothing. And if you push yourself to the point of exhaustion, headache, or nausea, give it a rest the next day. It's not worth having the world think you had a congenital heart defect.

—BRIAN DICKINSON

We keep on with the gin and the aspirin and the food additives, counting on

the liver to mop up the blood after our binges.

Money

The Tax Time Bomb

Don't let your pension plan blow up in your face

Let's say you're forty years old, self-employed, and making \$25,000 a year. Let's further say that you've been doing the right thing, socking away \$2,000 a year in a 401(k) or SEP plan for the last ten years. Being a conscientious saver, you're resolved to sock it in for the next twenty-five years—after which you figure you'll kick back and play Nintendo with the grandkids.

If that's your plan, folks, you're in for a shock. The fact is the more successful you are in pursuing your retirement plan—the more diligently you save and invest for the future—the greater the chances are that you're going to get whacked by two little-known provisions of the tax code that actually penalize people for saving too much.

Those laws were created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986. They established a ceiling on how much you can save in a 401(k) or other tax-sheltered plan and, if you die, how much your heirs can receive from it without penalty. The rationale of the gross-payout rule was that the government was offering a tax benefit for retirement savings but couldn't afford to create an unlimited tax shelter for wealthy savers. Net result: Sift away more than Washington decides a person needs to live "comfortably" in retirement and the government is going to get it back—either from you (via the so-called excess-distribution tax) or from your heirs (via the excess-accumulation tax).

TEN-CHRONION PROBLEM

will have saved as much as \$17 million more than you should have to live on these next-thirty-five years in reasonable comfort. As a result, the excess distribution and excess accumulation rules kick in to haul away the offending sum before it ruins your life with the temptations of squandering.

The excess-distribution tax is a 50 percentnick over and above your regular income tax, on any annual pension payments that exceed \$25,000. Since that sum already puts you in the 50 percent bracket, you've in fact set yourself up for a real tax-shock.

For savers, a pension fund of \$5 million for a sixty-five-year-old could easily pay out \$250,000 a year, before taxes, for twenty years before being depleted. But if you take the full distribution annually, you're going to find yourself in an even higher bracket—55.6 percent—plus you're going to pay that additional 5.6 percent levy on the difference between \$250,000 and \$250,000. In other words, you're going to find yourself in retirement taxed at an effective 65 percent rate—half again higher than the 50 percent bracket you're probably in now.

In fact, it's worse than that. At \$250,000 of adjusted gross income, you'll likely lose all personal exemptions and 50 percent on your standard deduction. The credit would wind up in the 50 percent bracket—and yet haven't even gotten to state and local taxes yet.

And don't think you can cushion the impact and avoid the tax by simply drawing out \$25,000 annually, leaving the rest to pile up and go to your kids when you die. That's where the excess-accumulation tax comes in.

Say you've had the bad luck to plan for retirement all your life and then die at age seventy with that great big wad of savings still in your

pension plan. If you'd started drawing out \$25,000 a year the rest allowable without penalty) at sixty-five, the plan would actually still keep growing. Assuming it's growing at 10.6 percent by the time you're dead.

Unfortunately, the IRS says that by then the plan should in fact have no more than \$25,000 in it. Anything above that amount gets slapped with that 50 percent levy when your kids get their hands on the dough—and then comes on top of any estate or inheritance taxes they'll have to pay in the meantime.

The net effect is devastating. On top of the 50 percent in federal estate taxes that your kids could pay on the whole \$17 million, they'll pay 55.6 percent more on the roughly \$14 million that's deemed excess accumulation. That's a total of 61.3 million in taxes off the top. Add in the federal and state income taxes they'll pay on the money that finally trickles through to them, and your retirement inheritance could be an ordinary income. In a high-tax state such as New York, that can result in losing away 99.9 percent of a retirement fund before the kids see a dime.

What can you do about it? Frankly, not much. If you're already retired and drawing from a pension plan with excess accumulation in it, Congress cut you a break last summer: a three-year window of opportunity during which you can take out any of the amount before the kids get it. You can leave all your retirement assets to your spouse, to whom they pass tax-free. This at least postpones the day of reckoning. And if the assets are interest-earning, they'll continue to grow by tax-deferred compounding, reducing the eventual 50 percent excess-accumulation tax

What if, on the other hand, you're still plodding away with the rest of us in what are laughingly referred to as the peak earning years? If you save for retirement outside a tax-sheltered plan you avoid the problem. But you need to invest for a much higher return because you forgo the benefits of tax-free compounding. Best strategy: Keep a close eye on the growth of your retirement portfolios, and when it starts to get



too big for Washington's taking, start putting away more money into growth funds that you don't plan to sell until retirement.

In the meantime, take period to hand write a couple of letters, and send them to Senator Bill Roth and Representative Bill Archer, the chief tax legislators in Congress. Tell them you want these laws repealed. Yes, you really

You can reach Christopher Ryan by e-mail at CRYAN@Proton.com

Services Is There an Accountant in the House?

As this week's MONEY column tag gets you ready whether you choose to not, be totally at least of terms, expert advice—the kind worthy investors get for \$400 an hour. Forget a right? Well, in fact, some day for accounting firms are also offering financial coaching to middle-income people, not when such services would normally be too expensive. What these firms have figured out is how to create economies of scale. The Irish Reach customers through their employees.

This year, H&M began a program with KPMG Peat Marwick to provide financial planning for individual clients—“help under \$100,” says Peat Marwick’s chief operating officer, everywhere from family budgeting and home buying to retirement planning, stock funding, and stock options.

Ernst & Young has several more ambitious programs, and often it is the company and the employees. That picks up the bill. “Companies are under increasing pressure to explain to their employees exactly what their rights and responsibilities are with respect to their retirement plans,” says De la Riva, a partner in the firm. “We help them do that.”

Ernst & Young signs a contract with a company like Kimberly Clark. Then accountants move in and hold training seminars at which the employees fill out comprehensive financial questionnaires. Each employee then gets a detailed report targeted toward their situation that contains the advice they need. It’s not a one-size-fits-all service when his circumstances change—a new child, a death in the family, a divorce or illness.

“We don’t give advice on specific stocks or other investments to put your money in,” says De la Riva. “There’s no reason we’re not asking anything except unbiased financial advice, and we don’t make a dime out of any of the other or our recommendations.”

Look for more such programs soon as America’s baby boomers begin the long march into deep middle age, steadily climbing with the sort of advice that was once the exclusive domain of the wealthy. —C. B.

The Office

First Among Egos

There's a story circulating about our boss: an egomaniac parading behind a thin smile. A year or so ago, when he was one of us, he went through a period when he complained about being too congenial.

"I'm a nice guy. I know," he is purported to have said. [My subliminal message: he was there to leave this.] "If I'm going to be management, that's a problem."

Well, he solved it. And just as interesting as how he ended up being such a prick is that he was right to begin with. He was a nice guy.

It is, apparently, a truth: the boss (particularly the middle-level guy) is a jerk, no matter what he (or, excuse me, she) was before he became the boss. Just pal? Your brother? Your lover? Doesn't matter.

Cautiously enough, the really big bosses—the ones who don't have to answer to anybody except themselves—know this. Why else would all those sensitivity training seminars for managers exist? They are, of course, unethical liars, but they are, I believe, from the belief of a previous generation that the ruling classes in any business environment is better.

It was in 1952 that Joseph Heller, in his barely humorous novel *Something Happened*, found the corporate ethos this way:

"In the office in which I work there are five people of whom I am afraid," says the narrator, a middle-aged corporate employee named Bob Slansky. "Each of these five people is afraid of four people (including overlaps), for a total of twenty, and each of these twenty people is afraid of six people, making a total of one hundred and twenty people

who are feared by at least one person."

The truth in this analysis led, eventually, to the sensitivity seminars, which counseled managers to be sympathetic to their charges' concerns, to stroke them when they're doing well, to emphasize teamwork. The idea, in other words, is to calm them down. And it isn't that it doesn't work. But when my boss of six months came by my desk and claps me on the shoulder in a paternal gesture that infuriates me because I'm actually six months older than he is and because six months ago we were having lunch together in the cafeteria twice a week, I want to scream.

"Sam, your work has been really strong lately, and we want you to know we appreciate it," he said to me the other day.

This kind of sensitivity addresses



the wrong problem. Office workers aren't afraid any longer, who would be afraid of this pompous hypocrite? Since Heller's book, we've had the '60s, the decade of greed and the '80s, the decade of blame. We're more aggressive minded now, more selfish. We don't fear, we hate. It so happens that my brother

was recently promoted. (We don't work together, so I still think he's an okay guy.) "They hate me," he told me, referring to his former colleagues. "I think it's that I'm the one who authorizes overtime, and occasionally I say no. I mean, we used to share stories about how we'd make our overtime when we needed to pay dental bills and stuff like that. What the hell are you supposed to do with that information when you're on the other side?"

He's right. In the age of inter-office hate, our resentments are not about who's got the better benefits package or the bigger office. They're about who has information. Among colleagues, there's a free flow of ideas, opinions, gossip. It's what binds us, what makes us colleagues—more, I think, than the work we have in common. So one of us becomes the boss, and the guy who was friendly, decent, a shrew, suddenly has new friends to be nice to. It's never surprising when someone gets promoted and suddenly gets a long battle with the other bosses. He's now plying to their secrets, and they want to know yours.

That's also why it's a difficult moment when a man is elevated. His good fortune is tough for everyone to endure, particularly during the congratulatory BS that's akin to showing pleasure when one of your own spurs defects. The question is, How do you handle it? How do you treat your former colleague?

Buddy, there's only one answer these days. No lowering of defenses anymore. Write the bastard off.

—SAM GRACE

PARLIAMENT

Lights



THE PERFECT RECESS



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6 mg. "tar," 0.7 mg. nicotine av.
per cigarette by FTC method.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

Motorring

By Phil Patton

**Do
Real
Men
Drive
Minivans?**

CULTURAL TURNING point no. 43: Steve Jobs sells his hippie-style VW bus for the cash to start Apple Computers. The microcomputer topples the microbus, this strange version of the Merry Pranksters' bus, as the counterculture tool of choice. Now Chevrolet ads use the latest in computer-aided design to show a hippie bus morphing into a new Chevy Monte Carlo.

A recovering station-wagon driver we know praises his new mini because, he says, you just can't fill it up.

The Venture and its siblings, the Oldsmobile Silhouette and the Pontiac Trans Sport, move far beyond the minivan styling and pulled people



The new frontier:
Team Sport Members—
the most useful
of the volunteers.

vertices of vases like the Montezuma. What it really has in common with the Big Sky State is not an limited speed but an unlimited space. A minivan seats up to eight and offers more space than an SUV but handles better, rides more smoothly, and can cost less. You sit almost as high as in an SUV but don't take the beating of truck-strap suspension. Its sliding doors make sense in tight parking lots. Its interior "package"—as the engineers like to call it, offers the most cubic feet of inside space per foot of length and breadth.

sons of the last generation of GM vans. Ford's Windstar has a new healthful front end and boasts of its no-noise-power. Chrysler still leads in positioning and designing them. The latest models look better than any minivan has a right to. It also produces "the ultimate minivan," the Chrysler Town & Country, which adds more leather and electronics to double the price of its poor relation, the entry-level Plymouth Voyager. Mazda has transformed its MPV (multipurpose vehicle) to look more like a sports car than a minivan. General Motors has baby boomers in ads featuring graffiti artist Keith Haring babies, and clicking it out on the signs of Manhattan as a symbol

The most macho meat yet, however, is the Montana version of Post's® T-Bone Sport. With the Montana, which the marketer touts as "more powerful than a herd of angry longhorns," Post's® takes us to Madison

country. The Monstera's designers were inspired to give an upla grille the look of a motor bull's flared nose and insert it on sporty Lotus-style spoked wheels. They swapped in lower-intensity in-socket black cladding that makes the thing look like a World War II duck amphibious vehicle and reminds us of the bulging rubber soles of old Keds, so useful for leaving speed streaks on schoolroom floors.

Many of these changes are only roadside stops. The engine is the same as in the normal Tami Sport. And, however many horsepower make up a horsepower, most drivers will want more of them than the Montana offers. The same, as case you didn't notice, evokes the same with no speed limit. But even with no horse the Montana will ride five speed more.

Sell, if you're willing to live with cut off the line acceleration, you'll have enough time to appreciate the

Bull terrier or bulldog faced, snouts are as friendly as bag dogs—they're the Saint Bernards of suburbs, ferrying two-by-fours from Builder's Square and two-to-fours to Toys "R" Us. A recovering station-wagon driver whom we know praises his new reason because it just keeps on accommodating stuff—loads, dogs, luggage, pots and pans. You just can't seem to fill it up, he marvels. It is, he says, "unfathomable technique."

Inclusion is right—a movie is like a big family house in summer, with everyone coming and going and nobody in anybody's way. In your Montana, you can turn up the Perry Montana tape—"I want to be a Cowboy's Sweet heart"—an eleven-one-the-kids' sex-romance-would had gotten from the back: "I these a town called Joe in Montana?"

You can reach Phil Rottet by e-mail at philrattet@MEN.com

www.six.degrees

By Daniel Radtch

How Push Comes to Shove

If you're on the Web, you've been pushed. Push technology silently and automatically delivers information directly to your desktop. News and sports arrive as they're "pushed" at you via something like e-mail, eliminating the need for browsing. So what? The chance to stumble onto something you weren't looking for is what makes the Web more than just a slower, less reliable CNN. When push comes to shove, websters say it's a less bawling, more pushy word.

US 177 public service testing

www.cnet.com/Content/Reviews/Compare/Push/
Push whodaddy? For answers to that not-quite-silly question, visit CNET. This article explains push and shows us servers, networks and links to CNET's browser-friendly list of the best

First Name: Cyle-Ann

Well, lots, like loans, and perhaps even a seed in the city. Click on the "infocenter.complex" for choices "space zoo" under the label, there's a link.

Supposedly, the Electric Blue Zoo would name and him.

At the **F** Zoo there are releases, games, fiddling with themselves. There's no entertainment at all, really just an index to virtually every useful animal site on the Internet. Try

Third names: *Silvestris* *marina*

These Soderstrom creations passed the litmus test because "computers are a lot of fun and enjoyment, and the Internet is the wave of the future." So we're in to the Sloydex Online, including those "waiting at the rainbow bridge" i.e., dead, while you browse, plays guitar electronic versions of Barbra Streisand songs. The architecture's certainly more fun.

Keywords: *Self-esteem, self-esteem threat, self-esteem threat, self-esteem threat, self-esteem threat*

Etan's CD can't get past about an hour. There's also no "rock" authenticity (Acoustic, no, "be some more" [Etan], and really taking electronic versions of Nirvana songs). Unpredictably, Etan recommends a visit to

Philip Burgess, *London, England*

This Christian site is a **wide keyword search** (finds eight instances of "Jah" if I'd like the site just a moment... the **ok** shall be stored) but some of those though most of (17) entries with **intensity toward Hebrews**—especially **African** a **Wikipedia** and **Mormons**—the **Free KoAl** link page which invites visitors to plug their own Christian sites, a **maybe too loving** **Unit** at **Unit** **MAR23** (2012) were **less likely to have negative content** (higher source code). There's a link to an **original**.

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The name, and even the limited UFO, are coincidental. This Heaven's Gate has a totally different eschatology. "I have found that nowhere in the Bible can I find any evidence of a judgmental attitude [sic] displayed by Jesus Christ," Spend some time here and you might realize it's not a cult—but one that designs web sites for a living. The Earthlink page focuses on—you see the connection—Star Trek, but there's also a link to an organization run by

Classify & Group

Shove founded ImpactOnline to connect veritable do-gooders with appropriate charities. "Many of us are willing to give our resources," she wrote, "but how to choose an organization?" For starters, if they ask you to reveal your "wealth," quit.

If you'd like to hook up with Daniel Radcliffe or throw him a challenge, you can e-mail him at quidditch@twinkl.com

Travel

The Next New-Age Nirvana

NELSON, BRITISH COLUMBIA, lies in a geographical limbo. As an eight-hour drive from Vancouver and the coast, three and a half days north of Spokane. To the east, there is nothing save the undulating blank of the Canadian prairie. The drive from Spokane is all speed ramps, logging bumps, and double-widens, as drivers go for what lies upriver, it is not an encouraging trip.

Suddenly, a thin hour past the border, there is Nelson—a busy enclave to those who, like Volcan, tend to dismiss Canada as but "several acres of snow."

I arrived on the first day of spring. Even then, as I

Here, in the unlikelyst of places, is that cultural anomaly, the Small Art Town.

of overgrown and glorified ponds replying one from that central pool—the town seems to rise over simply by supposing me. I'd come expecting Nelson to mark the lead-

ing edge of some fast-approaching dawn. I found a civility.

Nelson itself sits on a thin arm of Kootenay Lake, a glacial sea that runs very wide along the valley between the Selkirk and Purcell ranges. Sandy beaches like the shore, water sports, including kayaking and water skiing, date to the town's earliest days. A labyrinth of decommissioned logging roads makes the mountains a biking and cross-country mecca. And the backcountry riding is legendary.

For nearly six centuries, Nelson has been, quite literally, the middle of nowhere—the cultural, government seat, and cultural epicenter of the radiating region. By 1900, the prospectors and other backlanders had been joined by the Doukhobos, Christian pacifists who fled Czarist Russia with the financial aid of Tolstoy. The Doukhobos were followed by American dust dodgers, big game, and big game hunters and domestics—even a few Weathermen. As one local sign points out, "Nelson has always been cool."

By the early '80s, however, Nelson looked to be dying. So the town resolved, betting its riches on the only thing it had left in contact with neighboring horizons.

Below the south-western British Columbia, Nelson British Columbia offers visitors a unique alternative to the usual logging roads or simply taking in the view. Nelson is the westernmost of Kootenay Lake.



After a truly obsessive wave of restoration, Nelson now stands as an architectural showcase of Victorian edification and one-upmanship. I am hard pressed to find a single thing in need of paint.

Plenty of loose screws, though. "I don't know if you noticed," someone tells me early in my stay, "that Nelson has kind of a flaky edge." Maybe it was the upcoming Earth Race on the edge of town or the two to a buck after doing so in the fall. Core—

but, in fact, I had noticed. Of Nelson's great booles, the most visible seem to be the Boulder, Colorado, or some other



chakra point of the waterproof, breathable imagination. There are plenty of Peruvian sweaters, Shibusawa, and six necks, however, not Brooklyn girls aside the stream, their backpacks full of pumas and Powerbars. The gourmet coffee roasters have arrived. And as one

young wolf sniffs (as if I'd called into question Nelson's hippie-rocker credence), "We're well aware of Phob up here."

But this is more than a mere Instagrammed vintage outpost that's been infatuated by urbanites and worse mobs. No, Nelson is a node of goodness, a row of eager entrepreneurs—not just of organic veggies and local beef but of the unrefined, the spirit, the soul.

This part of British Columbia

known as the Kootenays (Kootenay), after the Kootenay Indians, the "water people," who once lived here. Geographically, the place is porous, a series of ranges running north-south, separated by lush, fishy rivers. Gentle ridges grant way to increasingly steep peaks, great snowy slopes that stand nearly two miles high. Then there's the water—countless miles of rivers and streams, lakes of every magnitude, waterfalls, hot springs. The Kootenays may not be Yellowstone, but they're close—and mighty quiet by comparison.

All of which would make Nelson an awful lot like a tiny, mossy Boulder—except that, after a day or two, the rain Nelson gets to show itself. Every evening is suffled with creature—kumquat, marmoset, meerkat, badger, a chocolate factory, a tiny and excellent brewery, a hemp store, a beautiful and bustling open-vintage market, a local art scene, a museum of all grades and persuasions. Here, in the antiseptic, and loveless, of places, is that mysterious cultural anomaly the Small Art Town—although, as a coffee pick makes clear, "This is still a town where loggers like to beat up hippies."

And it looks as if the left brain/right-brain split—between the Buddha and the Reformer—won't be reconciled anytime soon. This spring, the Prongle Lake-side Retreat and Convention Center came to

When Your Feet Are on the Ground

LODGING

Heritage Inn. Nelson's grand dame. The beautifully restored main floor has a big fireplace, carved cornices, and a great old bar. Rooms are sparse but tasteful. Drop the \$61 for a suite (250-350-5339).

Park Place Bed and Breakfast. A sturdy old year-old house with elegant years of complete renovation. A wonderful Motels sign of a fireplace, full of delays and vintage owners. Spacious, lovely, and well-appointed. Drop the \$57 for a single, \$104 for the whole upstairs—recommended. (352-4881)

Six-Mile House. Rusty three-bedroom house on the lake. Lots of woodwork, fireplace, sunny porch. Drop the \$69. **Ed's Motel Inn's Kootenay Country Cabin.** Rusty firehouse-style house on a mountain. Perfect for families. Kids can use the fireplace. Left beds, woodwork, picnic area. Use suite (354-4414).

FOOD

All Seasons Cafe. An excellent restaurant by any standard, with an award-winning chef. Don't mistake the green curtain for a sign.

Max & Irene's Kitchen. Great gourmet, rustic, sandwiches, and more. (352-4881)

Kootenay Cattle Company. A very good eat, despite the stuffed animals.

Sam's. Home of the fine little breakfast. **The Kootenay Bakery.** Breads of all sorts, home or other, really delicious, all day.

RV

Local Lodging. **Discovery Canada** can set you up for a range of activities, from technical climbing on a local glacier to an old growth forest, old-growth mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, camping, wildlife photography. Customized trip gladly arranged. (352-4280)

Willing. One of the largest stocks of outdoor salmon flyfishing, plus trout and lake trout, fly fishing and the local fishermen. Call the General Hardware (352-4333).

Backcountry and Sea-Cat Skiing. **Trailblazer.** Great new ski area, open all day, all year. (352-4333)

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[someone/jan poy ya] the linen on her lap. She throws it down on the table and comes to her feet. "Stop telling me what I know."

"You not?" He grips the table edge as though to steady it. The others are openly staring at them now. Again the big man clears his throat with that odd, cryptic sound. "Ah." The waiter stands at the entrance to the room.

"Be down," Ted murmurs. She heads toward him, across the table. "You will not be ordered around."

"Marlee, it's not emergency. Please. Please sit down. Sit down and we'll talk about whatever's bothering you."

"I have to use the bathroom," she says and it's almost as if she has addressed the waiter, who steps in command of herself. She reaches the bar at the back of her red and white, from a Ted and then at the water.

"Through here," the waiter says to her, indicating a small entrance across a corridor to the right of the fireplace.

"Thank you." She doesn't turn. She feels the copule run along her spine. Turning to her husband, she whispers, "You're wrong to be?"

His slant is flat, looking down at her hands.

"Wonder how much it costs to sit down at this," she says, stepping over to the bar where the waiter is waiting for her. She looks at her wrist as she holds her key. She studies her way across the room. The waiter is watching her as he stands by the big marble table, put in hand. As she reaches the entrance to the corridor, she indicates her own table. "I think my husband may be ready to apply for his marriage certificate," she says low.

"Good?"

"May we have some tea water?"

"Certainly."

"A few dollars' worth," she murmurs under her breath. In the high place, she pauses to look at the high pedestal of the table, the fountain with their brass handles. There are candle-like-shaped lights on either side of the table, and they glow her face a pale glow. She turns the water puts her fingers under it, then feels them at the bottom. The space under her skin looks spotted and the water her mouth and wrinkles her nose. Turning the water off, she lifts one of the folded linen towels from the shelf above the sink and wipes the drops away from her glass. Then she looks at herself, turns her face to the side a little. It's a fact she has never fully liked the look of, and now it seems too pale, the lips too dark.

A waiter after the and Ted were married at a gathering on a money boat not five miles away from here, while he

and Tilde rode under a tall maple tree, stepping leisurely and shouting about people they knew, some women in a Billy white blouse asked Marlee if she could so parties often with her father. "Oh, he's not my father," Marlee said. "I only know that way."

"I beg your pardon?" the woman said. "My mother and father have been gone a long time," Marlee told her looking directly into her eyes. "I'm my husband."

"Oh, I'm to marry?"

"Yes, I'm to marry," Marlee said. "Actually we're quite happy about it."

"I didn't mean," the woman began. Marlee took her gently by the elbow.

"It's fine really. It's just missing you. It's a perfectly natural impression for you to make. You weren't really married."

For the woman spoke the rest of the afternoon watching her and when Marlee told Ted about it, he and she were angry.

"They were I looked over at her, she was just looking away," Marlee said. "I could see her out of the corner of my eye."

"What was she looking at?"

"Look, it made me nervous, okay?"

And you spent the whole time talking to Tilde.

"I talked to Tilde for twenty minutes. And then we spoke for a little while to word the end. Anyway you can tell me she's looking you."

"I believed me today," Marlee told him.

"Well," he said, "that's just ridiculous."

This is what she says her husband would have said with her when some thing is so long, long, long.

She simply decides that whatever is bothering her is ridiculous, and that's supposed to be the end of it. "I don't want to discuss it," he tells her and his tone is nearly passed.

This infuriates her. This infuriates her and she has had any true experience that she has been looking down at her. She has been looking down at her. She has been looking down at her. She has been looking down at her.

The young don't really know what Time is, he likes to say and they have never one four, some they all believe they are married, that the effort this separates them from the old. He has and that Marlee never knew from a sleep, this she bewitched life into him, and they have laughed and been happy and in love when they've had any moment

moment of time alone. But then Tilde calls, or one of his far flung acquaintances or friends and everything seems to be going on on some other plane, at a moment that crowded life over there, but to which a moment, he never reached. The conversation is flat and with other people to other places, and other times, and Marlee has seen the association in him when he talks with these others especially Tilde. In any attempt to speak of this with him Tilde short. It's the first point, it's one of the things he finds individuals as a subject and with the one and the his possible finding the words to say exactly what she means.

Indeed, the has made saying much of anything that shows the same sort of association and attention from him. And for all his words, his moments compared with him, she's not easily understood or penetrated. She's been on her own from her mother's past, when her mother died. She never knew her father, who was lost in Vietnam. She spent her years moving among the various members of her mother's family, who she had been born with the family of her own mind, a substance who lived a life. On one trip he sometimes took Marlee with him. She saw much of the Pacific Northwest that way, riding along in an ancient black Ford, the suburban's favorite possession, a classic, with a jump seat and a running board and a horn that scarily even though. He was a devoted Christian but tended to drink more than he should and on one occasion, in a fishing boat near Portland, he got lost with her—how he was lost in water he tried to explain the following morning, blowing the alcohol and with himself dead. Marlee forgives him—it was just a few after all—and yet she is devoted about it as it was happening, the time had come for her to move on. He was more than dead to pay for everything, including a year in the Vietnam of Hawaii where she had seemed to go most the afternoon the sea images of the compass in one of those professional films during the halcyons of a college football game.

Somebody else believes that he has been married, but his history began only with the day he cannot the creek where he worked in Champagne the summer before last. He was a distinguished young lecturer in history, who renounced his wife's wealth and his two sons.

"No," she says definitely. "Oh, well, I guess this means he can't be anybody's partner."

"What's your doing?" Ted says. "Do you want to fight?"

"What did I say?"

"Just stop your voice down."

"How you really looking at the water?" she says.

He talks about as people speak on the meadows of a stream near Tilde has traveled the world, speaks several languages. She was married to a doctor (the third husband) the was once married to the was a certain strange open a night in jail for driving under the influence. She spent the weekend of her fifteenth birthday deeper diving off the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. And her first husband had watched her through the years, a healthy mind run, for all his many charms and his good looks—keeping to his orderly life, remaining single, doing his teaching and giving his lectures, spending his years in the movement, and all the while attending to the whereabouts of an crowd like a man waiting for something to change.

Now, stretched in the latter room of the bed in New Orleans, Marlee runs the up of her little finger along the soft, gloved edge of her hip and smokes them together. "Good," she murmurs. "Help me."

This surprises her the most again, just with her mother, she shakes her head, once and leaves the room.

At their table, her husband says low, "Good?" she says, taking her out.

"Good?" she says, taking her out.

"Good?" she says, taking her out.

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"Good?" she says, taking her out.

"Good?" she says, taking her out.

"Good?" she says, taking her out.

"Keep it down."

"Look at it," she says.

"For a glass," she says. "One glass."

"I want it."

She puts the water has down, life down in throat, writes deeper in her chair. He leans across with the silence.

"I've brought on for less than that."

"Oh, look at it, then," he says. "Can't you?"

"It's like playing a trick on you?"

"Let's just change the subject, please. This is supposed to be a celebration. I can afford the change for Christmas."

"But a broken you and I'm telling you that you don't have to go to the trouble. Not for me. I'm not the one with the expensive taste." She smiles at him, but he won't return her look. The skin along his

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"Keep it down."

"Look at it," she says.

AT A GATHERING ON A SUNNY LAWN A MONTH AFTER SHE AND TED WERE MARRIED, SOME WOMAN IN A FRILLY WHITE BLOUSE ASKED MARLEE IF SHE CAME TO PARTIES OFTEN WITH HER FATHER. "OH, HE'S NOT MY FATHER," MARLEE SAID. "IT ONLY SEEMS THAT WAY."

darkness is a water color—it's what happens to her complexion when his gets angry. "You're not mad at me because of that, are you? I'm not trying to cause you pain, I'm serious."

"Let's just quit talking about the past. The morning's a celebration. We're celebrating, aren't we?"

"I know, but you don't have to. I don't expect it."

"He has back and looks at her. "Do you want to say something else?"

"No."

"Oh, come on, Marlee. Stop it—what's in this isn't about the past."

"I haven't been to the slightest idea what you mean," she says.

"Well, I'm not," he says with a look of painful forbearance. "Maybe we can at last leave the subject of how much every thing costs."

The waiter comes to the table again and asks what the lady would like to drink. On an impulse, Marlee puts up the water has and points to the bread. "This," she says. "A double please."

The waiter looks at Ted.

"Do you have a problem?" Marlee says.

"This isn't normally served as a double, ma'am."

"Nevertheless, that's how I want it."

"Bring her what she wants," Ted says evenly.

"Yes, sir."

"Water," she says, stopping the man as he's moving away. "I need more water, too. This water is not fresh."

The waiter looks at her husband again.

Am I speaking too fast? Marlee says. "Do you speak English? Is this something

you need my husband to explain?"

The waiter glances at the water and goes.

After a pause, Ted says, "Sleepy now?"

"She's trying not to cry. She looks at the fading light in the window and builds everything back while he simply stands at her."

"Well," he says.

The waiter comes back through with the new glass of water and the bread. He sets the water down, then stands watching the bread as it softens, holding it up to the dim light and trying everything back while he simply stands at her.

"Well," he says.

"I'm not," he says with a look of painful forbearance. "Maybe we can at last leave the subject of how much every thing costs."

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"Well, I'm not," he says with a look of painful forbearance. "Maybe we can at last leave the subject of how much every thing costs."

a large gulp. The heavy stones of it nearly choke her, and a burst all the way down the gut into holding the drink, trying to breathe, while both men watch her.

"Are you ready to order?" Ted asks her, squaring her mouth. "Why don't you order for me, darling?" She smiles at him.

He turns to the waiter and orders the isn't even bubbling, like the heady and looks at the other couple, who are eating some appetizer and some amount of each other. Two men are seated at the corner. They appear curious. She makes a little promise to herself to watch their faces when they first get their menus.

The waiter starts to move off with Ted's order.

"Excuse me," Marlee says to him. Her poems, even with the reluctance of someone caught.

She holds up the waiter: "Bring me another one of these."

"Oh, for God's sake," Ted says. "You've made your point."

She points at him, and then can't help herself. "I like it," she says. "I can't help it. I thought you said money was no object."

"This is ridiculous," he says. "I want you to stop this right now."

The waiter has gone on, and now he sees the two men, who look at her across the table, the slightest sign of surprise or concentration. She wonders if they have seen the note about the cover charge. "Two-bits," she says to them.

They turn their heads.

"Look at the bottom of the menu," she says to the waiter.

For God's sake, Ted mutters.

The man stands at her and nod. Then they're talking to each other again.

Do you want to go? Ted says.

"What's the matter with you?" she asks. "I bet if I saw Tilde or I drank I was cheering."

"You hold a drink—can you do that?" Marlee, Tilde—like you?

"Respect, Tilde what?"

"Nothing."

"I'd like to know what you were going to say."

"Tilde's—Tilde," he says. "Understand I don't want you to be Tilde."

"I was going to say Tilde can get away with it, whereas I can't."

"No," he says. "Not exactly."

"Oh, boy, Ted. You've such a mouthful."

The waiter brings two plates and sets them down. Marlee looks at her, with a mean-looking, somewhat chaotic smile in the air, wrapped with them of someone and spirit of food. "Where's my other beauty?" she says, looking that the

friend to pursue it now for the sake of her pride, even his self-respect.

"Wherever the lady wants?" Ted says with a discomfited view of his hand.

"A double," Marlee says. "Don't forget."

The waiter moves off. Ted's watching her. She says the beauty is going down quite smoothly. "Quite a spectacle, I guess," she says.

He says nothing.

"Don't you wish Tilde was here?"

He stands. "Come on. Maybe I can get some of these."

"The man going anywhere?"

He seems about to do something unpleasant, then slowly sits down, holding one hand to his head.

Marlee says, "Poor Tilly." She means to drink him, but then she finds herself feeling sorry for him, for his discomfort.

The waiter brings the beauty and sets it down.

"Thank you," she says and finishes the one still holding. "It's amazing how much cover it goes down when you've had a little of it."

The waiter gives her the friendliest nod, smiling, happy.

Ted sits there with his hands to his head. She watches him for a moment, enjoying the second glass of beauty.

"The sorry," she tells him, and returns it. He begins to eat, concentrating on his food, without apparent enjoyment.

"So, because they figured out how to make beauty by accident," she says.

He's silent.

"I used to work in a liquor store, so I know," she says again, almost as big over the other, leaving back in her chair.

"You been around a little, now, you know I've worked some different jobs. I know some things. They bottled the wine. Burned wine, basically. See? They were trying to avoid a tax on it. They didn't know what the result would be. It was a complete accident."

He only shakes his head.

"Respects their surprise."

Nothing.

She takes another drink. "What I wonder, though—if it's that good—you just wonder how come nobody else drank it at all this time. How it could've survived the war and things. As you know, history was my subject in college. I didn't know, of course. I met the head—some and distinguished lecture and got married. I fell in love."

He glances at her but then looks down, sometimes silent.

"I'll understand you?"

"Hear," he mutters.

After a pause, she says, "Is that?"

His hands come down to the table edge again.

"The cheese. It looks kind of wet."

"Why don't you try it for yourself?" he says. "Or is that too much to ask?"

"Come on, Ted. You said money was no object."

She sits the beauty, watching him eat. There's a fondness about the way he's doing it, almost a faintness. It makes her want to vomit. Now she knows that is not the thing to do yet can't stop herself, even if she thinks from the way with him breathing and angry. "Tilly," she says.

His eyes look at her, he indicates her appearance. "Tilly," he says. "They'll be looking at the dinner again."

"Don't be mad," she says. "And stop talking to me like I'm your child."

He makes a sound like a cough. "I'll tell you. Marlee—I don't know how much I can keep doing this sort of thing."

"How sort of thing?"

He goes on eating.

"Tilly?" A little corner of uneasiness runs through her, even as the beauty makes her feel happy and sleepy again.

"I'm just not back for this kind of nonsense," he says. "I do not know anyone."

"Come on," she tells him, sitting her word. "I just wanted you to relax with me."

He says nothing.

"Hey," she says.

He sits there chewing, not looking at her.

"Tilly?"

"I'm beginning to wonder if I have the energy for it all the time," he says.

"Marlee, you don't realize all the demands, the all the things you require from a person. I don't know if I can keep it up."

"I don't require anything," she says, too loud.

"Okay," he says, leaning toward her. "Just please shut up now."

The waiter comes in, with most beautiful. Marlee's still holding the waiter, sitting with her legs crossed. The beauty is swimming in her head.

"Thank you," Ted says to the waiter as though he were alone.

"It's our anniversary," Marlee says.

"Congratulations," says the waiter, without the slightest indication. He looks at Ted.

"Ann just you going to work as a happy anniversary?" Marlee says.

"Happy anniversary," says the waiter. "Thank you."

He crosses the room. Ted keeps his attention on the food.

"I'll get you a drink," Marlee tells him. "I'll take care of the drinks."

He doesn't respond.

There's another couple now and the two men are watching—indeed, they're

staring at her. She smiles at them. "It's our anniversary," she says, indicating Ted. She turns to the two couple, still indicating her husband. "Wedding anniversary," she says to them. "One year. We've had a lovely one. We've traveled around together and gone to so many wonderful places. I've hardly had a minute to breathe or think."

Her even, parentheses appear to her. When the fact Ted again, she sees that her actually smiling in the corner, keeping up the appearance of a man whose happy with his wife.

But their attention does away and he looks, his lack of pleasure, disappears.

She holds her glass of beauty toward him. "A toast. The most reason to sit."

"Are you going to sit?" he says.

"A toast," she murmurs. "I'm not in drink glasses."

She looks toward him, trying for the most that will make him appreciate his again.

He takes her hand, using the last of the cheese.

"It's not wrong," she tells him. "And you've been wrong all the time. The whole year. You and Tilde and everybody else, so I know what Time is. Tilly. I've all ways known."

He sets the plate aside and puts the waiter to his lips.

"And I'm an awful snarker," he says.

"You figure," he says mildly. "But this is not the place to discuss it."

"I'm telling you the truth. The absolute truth. I know what for it all the way. And I'm feeling kind of lost now you know? How can you say how can you say I'm Tilly and all your friends and acquaintances, and I don't know any part of it and there's nowhere I can go and how can you say I require anything? I thought this was just about tonight. Ted."

"Please," he says. "Can we talk about it later? Don't mean crying now."

"I'm not crying," he tells her, sitting up back from. "Do you hear the way you talk to me?"

Just sit and stop that," he says. "And then I want to have to talk to you very."

For several moments, they are silent. She watches him eat. The waiter comes to be slightly louder and the others are all talking. The big man laughs, then coughs.

"Look," Marlee says. "I was just being silly okay? I didn't want to go around I thought it was—was—was—I thought we were having a problem about Tilde recommending that restaurant where I mean, I didn't know we were talking about the whole marriage."

With using the hand to wipe up the olive from the plate. It's as though he never even heard her.

"This and it was a celebration."

for God's sake."

"That's enough," he tells her. "Will you please leave alone."

She rises. Nothing in his face changes. "It was just that I was young," she says. "Weren't I? That was really the only thing."

His silent again.

"That's all you say to me."

"Oh, please," he says.

Already she stands. "Because me. I'll wait out in the car."

"Marlee," he says. But she walks away from him. Keeps past the waiter and heads down the long hallway with the pictures of dead presidents of the United States. The beauty there drink easier for so sensible into a chair, and her gut is very suddenly, but she keeps on feeling the need in heavy. When she reaches the end of the hallway, she sees

the spread of shadows and shade in the entrance to the restaurant.

She gets up behind the wheel of the car and pulls the door shut. All the sounds around her are her own. She puts back hands on the wheel and holds it tight, shivering, waiting, watching the entrance. Nothing says she thinks of Tilde, out in the world, somewhere under the very moon, living her interesting and glamorous life, with all its happy choices and all the long life and hope and associations, and then the moment when Tilde will say to do when he comes from the restaurant. Briefly it's as if she's occupying what punishment he might do out. Realizing that, she slides over to her own side of the car, the passenger side, which is as a wall of mountains.

Generally he'll be able to see her shape in the seat at home as he steps out

"DON'T BE MAD," SHE SAYS. "AND STOP TALKING TO ME LIKE I'M YOUR CHILD." HE MAKES A SOUND LIKE A COUGH. "I'LL TELL YOU, MARLEE, I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN KEEP DOING THIS SORT OF THING. I'M JUST NOT BUILT FOR THIS KIND OF MESSINESS."

from the shadow of the building.

Harried, almost frantically, she wipes her eyes with the palm of her hands, then takes a handkerchief out of her purse and begins trying to get the moisture off her cheeks. Her lower

mouth, there's a sharp pinch in her side. She takes a deep breath and tries another, and then she snatches the handkerchief to her lips, puts it away, muttering the look she hopes, of someone who has been sighted, whose attention has been wounded, and so when an spotlight is due. She tries to hold on to it, smothering the folds of her skin over her lower, running her hands through her hair, trying to keep a perfectly disguised discomfort—which, for the moment, is all she can do, strong here alone, frightened, at the start of a change she hadn't even counted on.

There's nothing moving anywhere in

thought of anything happening to him or Alexander after his death was unbearable, and yet now he wouldn't be there to protect them, to give guide for them. He'd call Anna again from the next gay station and get her to check on his medication, or maybe he could see Sugar's mother.

Sugar was looking forward again, breathing Lange's hair, grunting and working at Tommy, who clearly at the moment looked like he was in Sugar's constantly pronounced immediate future. "Holy shit," said Tommy, lifting his hands completely from the wheel. "I'm a guy. It's fucking Paul Sugar. It's driving Paul Sugar. Must! Just wait till I tell my wife about this."

Sugar beamed, and Lang laughed at well, feeling like a fool.

THEY GOT NO FARTER, nothing, wooded, a variety of ashes dotted with red mistletoe for its status glory. Lang and Sugar glanced inside the money crumpling cathedral of the gay station. They saw a city full of red mistletoe. They walked down a street full of money and restaurants that wasn't making it, then up another where formerly grand colonial wood-frame houses had fallen into decay, as if in sympathy with the lines of blooded children.

Sugar was wearing laughter. This wasn't optimism or naivety. He was resigned now here, in the open, a crowd would gather, a situation beyond either of their control, like all movie stars, Sugar found with some justification that the barely repressed desire of the American people was to see him down on his knees in prayer and covered with dust, a longing that the broadly Lang understood and even shared at that moment. The full absurdity of the situation passed on to his chest. He was hungry and thirsty. He needed a drink, and he needed the call about his medication. That could go on for weeks, he thought with dismay.

They'd turned onto another street suggestive more of strained human hope than outright unrequited passion. Sugar looked directly up and down it before saying, "This is where I live."

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Lang looked back at the blossoming cherry trees. Everything Sugar had up until now, and had become, was no doubt a function of this place, yet whereas some other movie stars turned such scenes of

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"You're English," said Sugar. "Don't you miss all that?" "Sometimes," said Lang. "I have to accept that I made a jump cut. Sugar said, 'They can work sometimes.'"

"We should talk about whether I'm coming to work for you or not, we should talk about your money," Lang said, but Sugar frowned. He was far too wary to discuss and slippery, to be drawn in by such a direct statement. He raised his eyebrows, another of his screen gestures, glanced at his watch, and then jerked off wonderfully across the street with eyes narrowed. "Here's a movie that we can't see what's playing," Sugar said, then said that in a state of nervous exhaustion, and of this scene, a generous man, and Lang stepped after him through the deserted multiplex lobby, his heart rooted by the flowing circle of the person's power.

Sugar disappeared into the men's room while Lang walked himself slowly in front of the tiny screen. The seat was worn, and the window floor was pitted with the previous night's soda and candy. He was disappointed again, even angry, and Sugar, among it, was in a constipated mood when he came back. Lang couldn't see the face of his friend, but he heard the hands Lang's big rub of popcorn and the sound and he down himself, not next to Lang but off to the left in the row in front. "You look at this place. It's a mess, isn't it?" He helped himself to a handful out of the popcorn bucket. "He told all that one week ago, and he's back. We try to make things look like a picture. We try to make them most gloriously together, all the different parts. And then the movie ends up on a postage stamp in New York. What does that tell you? Sugar is everywhere," said Sugar, and they sat looking at the screen, the screen of the screen, the screen of the screen.

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[continued from page 10] myself described by my own wife and child as this possibly subversive mental defecator was a revelation. I was simply unaccounted at the highly sensitive information that could be obtained through a baby monitor.

And so, within the next twenty-four hours, I sent Gabby in Dimp into a playhouse. (Well, not really.)

That day I stopped being just a father. I became a case officer, running an agent.

Now, GABBY GAMES at this age are all theory and no practice. I'll be planning. I'll be the big dog and you'll be the baby and I'll take you to the beach and we'll have a picnic and you'll go out into the ocean and drink and I'll see you and you'll kiss me and I'll turn into a jelly who has a melting soft, it seems. But you have carefully studied all of this when the preliminary are the matters of information you're after.

Imagine my girl when, after an hour of lying on my office floor, the Fisher-Price monitor pressed against my car as I filtered the most innocuous phrase, I danced upon the following.

Let's pretend we're walking in a huge forest and we meet a fairy family and they take us to their house for a dinner and we go there and watch colors and air systems and meet both and then the fairy family say, "Do you want to be like them?" and we say, "Okay," and then the daddy fairy makes an unaccounted unaccounted fun in a chair and then in order to take this only young woman who works near the DMV to Arabie for long weekends.

Becky?

ALTHOUGH THIS was a supremely effective method and I quickly sensed shock down on my neighbors, it wasn't long before I began to feel humiliated by the fact that I was recording everything only those playmates that took place in my own house. If only I could eavesdrop on my daughter's off-line playdates—imagine the level of intelligence I could plunder. But I broke the technology—that is, until I paid a casual visit one afternoon to my neighbor's chain Minsky.

There we were, sitting back, listening for a malicious cellphone conversation on his scanner, when we stumbled upon what sounded like two toddlers playing.

"What the hell is that?" asked Minsky.

I recognized it immediately. It was a playdate—over a baby monitor! "You got baby monitors?" I asked, excitedly a mass of gooseflesh.

"Baby monitors. But since baby monitors broadcast a signal just like cell phones, I probably pick up most of the baby monitors in Hoboken. During at night, though. It's just kids hawking—fence, sleeping."

"That's because you only listen at night, fool. You gotta listen during the day—when they have their parties."

ONE EVENING, I went out to look for a baby monitor cup that Gabby said she'd left in the car. I was wandering around in the backseat of my brand-new Lexus LX450 (fender reading and National can be pretty loud) when, in a shiverlike compartment of her car seat, I came upon a roll of microfilm. I got out of the car and held

the film up to the streetlights. I was dumbfounded by what I saw. There, in a series of hastily taken shots, were my preliminary notes for my Equine column on Gary's gelding named Gabby. And Gabby had been there! She'd been doubled!

I walked back into the house, picked Gabby up in my arms, and brought her into her room for an interrogation. I removed the Baxter Posternoff shade from her lamp to expose the bare light bulb. I experienced a flitting memory of pink a sense that all this was somehow my fault, that maybe I'd gone a little too far with all the spook stuff—the vacuum in Langley, the allowance in South Korean won, the Kim Philby coloring books. ("Now I'm a general in the KGB!" "See, Ruth, my pretty new Russian wife!" "It's so nice as my daughter!") But I passed.

"Daddy?" I proffered, shaking out two from the pack.

She took one in her mouth. I took the other.

I unfurled the microfilm.

"Why?" I asked.

She just sat there, impassively, this tiny, iron-haired, impudently beau-

tiful, throwed, case-hardened girl. "Do you want to play, Daddy?" she said finally.

"Sure," I replied, ever incapable of resisting her wily blandishments.

"Okay," she said, "let's pretend that Tim Princess Odessa and you're Prince Derek and you find me in the woods and I'm weak because the Evil King put a spell on me and that little doggy and that little rabbit help you find your magic how and arrow and—"

"The doggy and the rabbit can't help us," I interrupted.

"Why not?" she asked.

"Because because they work for Susan McDougal and Jeff Finkelschtein, who are Minsky agents responsible for sabotaging the Hubble Space Telescope and the Chapel of the Holy Shroud in Trier."

As soon as I said it, I realized what a devastating breach of security I'd committed. My daughter had induced me to reveal information that would cost the lives of dozens of human beings around the world.

I also knew that Minsky was listening. And I had an intuition. I ran out of the house and barreled to Minsky's apartment.

His door was wide open. There he lay, unconscious, face-down on the floor of his living room, a translucent shade in his left buttock. I stepped over him and walked across the room to the dresser. Bare enough, it was stained to my baby monitor. I could hear Gabby's congested breathing and the miserable sound of her choking.

I snuffed the air, which was familiarly pungent. Only one woman wore that distinctive carnal blend of scented-dye parts Opium, one part Anna Anais, with a dash of her Myomi!

I roused down the steps of Minsky's tenement out onto the sidewalk. The ghastly evidence of my mother was disappearing in the breeze.

And suddenly with the terrible clarity of a man too long deceased, I understood the whole appalling trick. I was out. Out in the cold. In



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Tinker, Tailor, Toddler, Spy

The baby monitor was on. Gabby was in deep. But could she be trusted?

Mark Leyner

I never used my four-year-old daughter, Gabby, as a mole to penetrate another family on April 30, 1992.

I arranged a playdate for Gabby at our home with the daughter of the proprietor of a major mechanical manufacturer. I placed the transmitting unit of a sophisticated listening device—the Fisher-Price baby monitor—in Gabby's bedroom, and as the two children played, I eavesdropped via the receiver/speaker unit located in my office, while Gabby artfully induced her friend to reveal extremely confidential information about the impending merger of her father's company—a merger that would significantly increase the value of the company's stock.

I was also able to glean from the indiscreet daughter that her mother takes clandestine bubble baths with their Haitian au pair every afternoon—information I filed away for possible future use.

Why would I be interested in blackmailing my neighbor? Uh... looks, I guess, just for the thrill of it.

But remember that it's a deeper reason. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, we no longer have the Manchurian convenience of a grand ideological scheme in a single-polar world, upon whom the can we trust our natural propensities for malice, dissimulation, and probably but one another?

And I don't know about you, but I owe enemies. Luckily, for the profoundly paranoid there's no

shortage of assigned antagonists out there. From the parents who blithely send their infant, parasite, incessant sprawling offspring to school with full knowledge that they're exposing your kid to some inextinguishable disease, to the rogue codemongers in baby-like argot

in Gabby's room, ruckus her into bed in advance of my singing her lullabies (Each night, I sing Gabby a song to help her fall asleep. It started out weak just "Rock-a-Bye Baby." But one night, after I'd finished that soothing classic, she asked for another, so I added "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

And then each successive night, she asked for one more, and, because I tend to be a somewhat indulgent father, the program grew over the months. I now perform a medley that includes "Rock-a-Bye Baby," "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," "This Old Man," "It Never Rains in California," "Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting," "Don't Fear the Reaper," "Nuthin' But a 'G' Thing," "O more beautiful from Caribbees," "Hitchhiker," and the Trencham Hotspots fight song.) I was in the dining room, and I happened to turn on the monitor just in time to overhear Mami admonishing Gabby not to take advantage of my inability to say no.

"One sing and you go to sleep. One. That's it."

But Daddy sings me lots of songs."

"Your father's weak. His only unappetized."

"I know that, Mommy."

"It's wrong to take advantage."

"I know; he's so... so..."

"Anxiousness? Pliable? Docile? Speechless?"

"He's such a... such a..."

"Doesn't Daddy suckle?"

"Yah, Sucker."

Hearing [continued on page 116]



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